

HE DECEIVES HIMSELF.

*A DOMESTIC TALE.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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VOL. III.

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THE DECEITFUL HIMSELF





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*A DOMESTIC TALE,*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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By MARIANNE CHAMBERS,

*Daughter of the late Mr. CHARLES CHAMBERS,*

Many Years in the Service of the Hon. East-India Company, and unfortunately lost in the *Winterton*.

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" I leave no calling for this idle trade,"  
" No duty broke, no parent disobey'd." *Pope.*

Thus to my thoughts I said——  
—— If ye will roam,  
Go---But remember, ye were safe at home. *Anon.*

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VOL. III.

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1799.

HE DECEIVES HIMSELF.

A FINEST YEAR.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

MARIANNE CHAMBERS.

Author of "The Chambers of the Heart."

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## HE DECEIVES HIMSELF.

A DOMESTIC TALE.

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### CHAP. I.

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**W**HO shall fix decisively on what point happiness depends? or who shall say, When I have arrived, at such a height, mine will be permanent? Every reflecting mind must powerfully have felt how incapable we are to judge or determine upon the moral events of life, when the completion of our wishes so often proves the means of counteracting our peace, and removing from our lips the cup of happiness we have been so eager to attain!

Angelina's feelings, on her arrival in London, illustrated this truth ; for, as soon as she reached this seat of fancied happiness, the first piece of intelligence that struck her ear, suspended every pleasurable idea ; for, immediately on their coming to Park Place (Sir Edward's town residence), a letter was delivered to him from Mr. Willmot, acquainting him with the death of old Mr. Avordale, Mrs. Summers' father.

It was late when they got into town, and Angelina had retired to her chamber. When this letter was brought up to her, she felt a severe shock upon reading it : yet it was by no means an unexpected event ; for she had long been prepared to hear it. When the mind is elevated by any excess of joy, it is more tremblingly alive to that of sorrow.

She paused upon the words—" *He is dead !*" for some moments, whilst the tears, without any effort to impel or restrain them, ran down her face.—She was thinking of Mrs. Summers and Lucy.

Why

“Why has my heart been so light,” said she, “whilst those so dear to it were overburthened with grief?” — Every scene she had witnessed with them presented itself to her fancy; she saw the reverend form of the departed, seated in his great chair at the rectory; in his countenance shone that mildness and benignity that had instinctively drawn her heart towards him with a kind of reverential love. She heard the precepts of moral virtue flow from his lips, as he taught—That to be good, is to be happy.

“Heaven’s genuine pity glist’ning in his eyes,  
The sweets of charity he would instill,  
And teach what blessedness of comfort lies  
In universal mercy and good-will.

Unruly Care from him was far remov’d,  
Grief’s wildest clamours at his breath would cease;  
O! in his blameless life, how well he prov’d  
The house of goodness in the house of peace!”\*

“A few months ago,” sighed she, “and thus I beheld him.—Now he is no more! —their society will be no longer rendered

\* Hull’s Plantagenet.



interesting by his presence! the mild accents he was wont to breathe, will never be heard again!—how will they miss him at the table, where his smiles have so often cheered them!—and, in their evening walk, when he would recline on his children, whilst his sinking frame asked a return of that tenderness and support that at a foregone period of his life he had so cheerfully bestowed upon them—in these rambles he would inspire them with confidence in their God; for *his religion* consisted in the sentiment of nature, and *his morality* in action, like that of the Gospel.”

Her thoughts were detached from every other subject, and dwelt upon the happiness of a peaceful death.

At that hour she thought—(which levels all distinction)—how amply are they rewarded, who, like him, have resisted all temptation to the alluring pleasures of life, and whose best (though imperfect) effort of virtuous exertions have been wholly

wholly devoted to the commands of their God.

The pleasures of this life are, at best, but gilded toys! Who, then, would sacrifice to them the peace of an hour like this? "The time must come," said she "when *I* shall feel the happiness or misery of such an hour. What will it then *matter* whether I meet it in affluence or poverty, so that my heart is found uncorrupt? In all the vicissitudes I am doomed to know, O! may it ever be found humble, and resting with fear on its own virtues. If in prosperity, unassuming; in poverty, content; and, in whatever situation, prepared, as far as human exertions permit, for the acceptance of HIM on whose will it depends!"

With this fervent ejaculation she retired to rest, where scenes of visionary bliss floated before her sleeping fancy.

In the morning, when they met at breakfast, Mr. Eldwin noticed her dejected air, and reproved her for giving



way to what he called a childish weakness. The severity he had so long affected was now become habitual to him, and Angelina did not feel much relieved by his harsh reproofs.—Finding herself unable to answer him without accompanying her words with tears, she was silent.

Sir Edward, who had observed with surprise and fear her emotions, fixed his penetrating eyes on her with fearful inquisitiveness, as if he was diving into the inmost recesses of her mind, and trembling for what he should find there. Her agitation increased, without knowing why: as he gazed, her colour went and came repeatedly. Observing her evident confusion, Sir Edward could ill conceal his own; the cup shook in his hand; his eyes struck fire; he was entirely off his guard, and had not power to conceal how much he was affected.

His betrayed the embarrassment of guilt; her's the confusion of innocence.

Mr.

Mr. Eldwin asked his father, if Mr. Willmot had applied for the living?

“No,” he returned; but it was some seconds before he could utter this monosyllable; when, raising his voice in an impassioned tone, he exclaimed—“I have suffered enough by that family already; I don’t know what I may suffer more; and, by Heaven! I swear, I will have nothing more to do with any of them. I will seek out another person immediately, and put him in possession, rather than any of that family shall have it.”

It was not Sir Edward’s intention to have made this declaration so public; but he was surprised into the avowal of his sentiments by the fears which, at that moment, possessed him. He continued pacing the room in violent agitation; when, seeming to recollect that there were witnesses to his conduct, he was hastily quitting it; but, at the door of the apartment, he was stopped by the servant ushering in a stranger. Sir Edward, not having time to withdraw himself, turned

to him with a countenance so changed, that, had not the family been witnesses to his emotion a moment before, no one would have believed it could have been ruffled. His manners were, at once, courteous and gentle, whilst his features were dressed in smiles of complacency.

The stranger introduced himself as the friend of Mr Willmot:—"He came," he said, "to solicit Sir Edward in favour of his friend, who now wished to be at a certainty relative to the living of East-Cliff."

"This is very extraordinary," said Sir Edward, after a moment's pause: "I have just received a letter from him, wherein he never hints at such a request."

"When Mr. Willmot wrote," replied the stranger, "he was, doubtless, too much engrossed by the melancholy subject of his letter; and I question, Sir, if he thought of himself."

"So

“ So it appears,” said Sir Edward ;  
“ but I know no reason why, on that account, I should think for him ; and you may tell him, Sir, from me, that, by his neglect, he has lost the living ; for, in consequence of his not mentioning it, I imagined it was indifferent to him, and, therefore, gave it, this morning, to a gentleman who thought it worth his while to solicit it :” adding, very pompously, “ that a man of honor’s word was his bond.”

“ Most assuredly,” said the stranger ;  
“ and he who forfeits it, breaks the most sacred contract between man and man. But, Sir,” said he, “ ought it not to be held alike sacred to all ? You have promised Mr. Willmot frequently ; and I was in hopes there would have been no occasion to have pointed out to Sir Edward Eldwin the justice of this young man’s claim.”

“ You have been misinformed,” he replied : “ I never gave him my promise in direct terms.”

“The modes of expression may differ,” said the stranger; “but it is the sense on which we depend; and whether the terms were direct or indirect, by which he was led into a belief that the living should be his, matters not; and you are as strongly bound by the laws of honour to fulfil it, as if the sense had been never so perspicuous. The man, Sir, let me tell you, who would avail himself of such a subterfuge to break a promise thus given, should not be security for me, though there was an agreement between us executed, witnessed, and sealed by the Lord Chief Justice of England!”

“You speak warmly, young gentleman,” said Sir Edward; “but I can excuse it, as it is in the cause of your friend. I should be very happy to oblige you; but, at present, it is out of my power, at least in this instance.”

“I have not the folly to expect it,” returned the stranger; “for if you could, for one moment, hesitate to whom you should present it, after its having been so many  
years



years in Mr. Avordale's family ; and considering the particular claim they have to it, from the unhappy circumstances that preceded the death of the young Lord Treclanna, I, as a stranger to you, Sir, can have no hope of succeeding in my solicitation."

Sir Edward sat uneasy ; he was entirely ignorant that these circumstances were known out of the family :—his manner towards the stranger was immediately changed.

" That unhappy event," continued the young man, " robbed the old gentleman of a ——"

" Sir," said Sir Edward, hastily interrupting him, " I will think of it ; I will see what can be done ; things may yet be accommodated : in the mean time, I would have you defer writing to East-Cliff for a few days. I will endeavour to see the person I have promised it to, and by this means serve Mr. Willmot. I know he is a very deserving young man,



and I cannot help lamenting that he did not make the application sooner."

"His silence, Sir, was the highest compliment he could pay to your *honour*—he thought *that* a sufficient security."

"I am sure he did," returned Sir Edward; "yes, yes, I know his motives are good; I shall be able to manage it; but I am very much engaged in business at present; I have affairs to settle of other people's beside my own, and I must beg you to excuse my leaving you."

"I beg, Sir," said the stranger, "I may not detain you longer than is necessary; but, at the same time, I should wish it to be understood, that, though you have disappointed Mr. Willmot in this instance, there is no occasion for your acting, on his account, with dishonour to another. The gentleman to whom you have given it, no doubt, expects you to fulfil your promise; and, having the same confidence in it as Mr. Willmot had, will feel himself equally aggrieved."

A man

A man of conscious integrity would not have felt himself very easy at receiving so many severe reflections on his character from a stranger ; but Sir Edward could put up with indignities of this sort, for he was pretty well used to them ; and, without seeming to feel this odium, he left the room with repeated invitations to Mr. Willmot's friend, that he would call on him in a few days.

Lady Eldwin was too insensible to feel this conduct of her husband. All her concern, during this conversation, originated in the stranger's presence. She was shocked at his free manner of expressing himself to Sir Edward ; for she had not judgment to decide whether this warmth of conduct was justifiable or not : her penetration was generally regulated by the temper of her mind, and she was not now in a humour to discover, in a person who was employed to *solicit favours*, by his animated countenance and frankness of address, that nobleness of sentiment, which has not only virtue to be shocked at injustice, but spirit openly to resent it. " It is

is a strange thing," said she, turning to Miss Dorothy, "that the servants usher in *people* where *I am*, that come upon business to Sir Edward."

The stranger looked at her with an air of smiling curiosity—he did not, however, attempt moving; and Ethelind, regardless of her mother's frowns, asked him, good-humouredly, if he had breakfasted?

"What a question," said her Ladyship: "do you suppose that people who are in business live as *we* do?"

"No, madam," said the stranger, "Miss Eldwin has not such *vulgar* ideas; and though it is true that I have breakfasted some hours ago, I cannot decline her offer." So, without any further ceremony, he drew his chair to the table, and seated himself with the ease of an old acquaintance; and, with a provoking familiarity, chatted to Lady Eldwin.

Unaccustomed to be treated with so little ceremony, she could not conceal the mortification she endured from this behaviour; and, after having listened to him in fullen silence a few minutes, she turned to Miss Dorothy, and, with a look of pointed indignity at the stranger, said—"the manners of people that are unaccustomed to the society of upper life are horrible!—but such conduct is entirely the effect of ignorance."

"I am exactly of your opinion, madam; I hate those impudent fellows who take the liberty of feeling themselves at ease, even where it is the company's study to awe them into respect." As he said this, he was helping himself very freely to some biscuits which stood on the table.

"You may always discover a common person," said her Ladyship, "by the contempt they affect to have for their betters."

"Not always," he answered; "for, if you were to judge of characters thus superficially,

perfidiously, your Ladyship might sometimes imagine you were honoured by the presence of a gentleman, when, in reality, you were condescending to talk with his valet; for every fellow now has learnt to utter as many unmeaning things as his master.

“ I believe,” said she, “ there are some people vulgar enough to suppose, that, by insulting their superiors, they display a great talent of wit.”

“ Your Ladyship can be in no danger on such occasions,” answered he, carelessly; “ for *great wits* generally level *their* aim at *objects* worth hitting.”

Her anger was evident.

“ There is nothing so difficult as awing the vulgar,” cried she.

“ A great mind is above wishing it,” said the stranger, sipping his tea very composedly.

Her



Her Ladyship, finding she could not awe *him*, had recourse to her old means; for it was a rule with her, to be intimately acquainted with great people before strangers. After mentioning several, she said to Ethelind—"Has your brother called on Sir Frederick Marsdale, as he promised to do? If you had asked him before he went out, he would have brought him here to dinner—he is a great favourite of mine, *he is a polished gentleman* in his manners." This was rather more than her Ladyship was justified in saying, for she did not even know him personally; but it was enough that he was dignified, to recommend him to her notice.

"I know him well enough," said the stranger; "though I seldom ever heard much of his politeness before: but, perhaps, your Ladyship is better acquainted with his character than I am."

"*Acquainted* with him," she repeated—"why, he is one of our most intimate friends."

friends. Are you one of his trades-people, pray, that you seem to know him."

He smiled. "I have been in the habit of acting for him many years."

"He is in the law," said Ethelind, "isn't he, Sir?"

"A barrister, madam," answered he, bowing.

Her Ladyship felt herself now exceedingly mortified at having condescended to talk so freely to his clerk. "I beg, young man," said she, "you will never take the liberty of mentioning our names; or, of your ever having been in our presence. It is a thing that never happened before, I assure you; but I fancy the servant made a mistake, and took you for a gentleman."

"Your Ladyship was *determined* not to commit the same error," said he."

"I never

"I never do," she answered (not understanding his meaning): "I can always tell people by their looks."

"Shall I present your compliments, madam," said he, rising to go, "to Sir Frederick?"

"By no means."

"But—as you are so intimate with him—"

"I beg," said she, in evident confusion, "you will not take the liberty to say you ever spoke to me."

"But, dear madam, as you are so *very* intimate, he will think you do him an honor by noticing me, and be highly entertained at your servant's gross mistake in *taking me for a gentleman*."

Her Ladyship did not feel much at ease by these frequent importunities, which were delivered in a tone of pleasantry,

fantry, rather intended to excite laughter than respect. "And, pray, Miss Eldwin," said he, turning to Ethelind, "has *Sir Frederick Marsdale* the honour of being a favourite of your's too?"

Unwilling to expose her mother, she said, "that she had heard his uncle, Mr. Walpole, speak very highly of him."

"I am afraid, by your looks," he replied, "that you do not like him; and if that is the case, he may have to repent his ever having seen you."

She coloured, but there was an air of respect in his pleasantry that could not offend her.

"If I thought," said he, "that you always made tea as well as you have done this morning, I believe I should often be an intruder—Will you admit me?"

This was rather too great a trial for her Ladyship's patience; she rang the bell

bell furiously for the servant to shew him the door. "I thought," cried she, "that Mr. Willmot knew our family better, than to suppose it would submit to be tamely insulted by sending a parcel of *I-dont-know-who's* here. It shall be the worse for him, if I have any power over Sir Edward."

"Don't be in a passion, my dear madam," said he, calmly, regardless of her Ladyship's menace: "consider the *intimacy* that subsists between you and Sir Frederick; for *his* sake mitigate your anger, or I shall be under the necessity of intreating him to interfere with you in my behalf;" and then, bowing with an air of pleasantry, he was leaving the room, when Lady Isabella Irwin was announced, and she immediately entered. Lady Eldwin, in agony, lest the stranger should be seen by this young friend of Ethelind, waved her hand impatiently for him to retire: but, regardless of this motion, he remained in the room until they had all paid their compliments to her; and then, stalking up with an air of  
mock



mock gravity, making a profound bow, he exclaimed, "*My dear Lady Isabella, never take me for a gentleman again.*"

"I can never believe," cried she, laughing, "that Sir Frederick Marsdale has given up his claim to that title."

Lady Eldwin never felt herself so little, as at the moment she discovered her mistake; nor could a sermon, preached on the folly of pride, have impressed the truth upon her mind with half the force that this incident did; and, secretly, she determined never to mention great names any more. She endeavoured to make an apology, but failed in the attempt. "If I had known," she cried, "that I had been honoured with Sir Frederick Marsdale's company, I should have conducted myself very differently."

"I am very glad you did not, madam," said he, "for then I might never have discovered that I was indebted to my title for your Ladyship's respect."

Not any thing could have appeared more ridiculous than her confusion at this moment ; and Sir Frederick, seeing how severely he had punished her for her folly, in compassion to her feelings took his leave : first apologizing for not having introduced himself formally.

The ladies went out shopping—Angelina was not asked to accompany them. These unkindnesses from her Ladyship were nothing new, and, on the present occasion, she felt perfectly content in being left alone. Her thoughts dwelt upon the scene she had so recently witnessed with Sir Edward and the young Baronet ; for her confidence in the former that morning had received a considerable shock ; as, during her residence in the family, she had never before seen so much of Sir Edward's character. His dislike of Mr. Willmot, and his indignant manner of treating Mr. Avordale's memory, surprised her, for she was wholly ignorant of the cause. It was Sir Edward's dissingenuous conduct towards them, and the sudden change in his behaviour  
when

when addressed by Sir Frederick Marfdale, that staggered Angelina's faith in his virtues, and raised in her hitherto unsuspecting mind many painful doubts and fears.

She thought it cruel:—his having deluded Mr. Willmot so long with the hope that the living should be his, and now deliberately framing so gross a falsehood in order to excuse himself from fulfilling his promise, namely, by declaring to Sir Frederick, that he had given the rectorship to another; when, before the latter entered, Sir Edward had passionately sworn to seek out an object to present it to. If he acted from pique, his conduct was less justifiable, in taking advantage of the power which he had over them at a moment when they were overwhelmed with affliction; consequently they were more likely to feel the disappointment. What an opportunity there was, thought she, to have proved himself superior to such littleness, and have still taken the noblest revenge, by convincing them that he had not only a mind  
great

great enough to forgive an injury, but a hand and heart ready to assist the aggressor.

The youthful mind, glowing with the love of virtue, starts involuntarily at every species of guilt; but when it is compelled to discover the transgressor in the person it has loved and admired, it is, perhaps, not only the most difficult, but also the most painful task to condemn it.

The duplicity of Sir Edward's conduct was now too glaring to pass uncensured; and she felt a degree of painful confusion in acknowledging, even to her own heart, that he had acted in this instance unworthy of himself.

Suspicion is misery to the open and sincere; and Angelina strove to dissipate these reflections, as enemies to her peace.

It is not likely that she would have succeeded in banishing this subject from her thoughts, if they had not been al-

most immediately dispelled by the presence of Mr. Montague.

Whether it was, that she did not expect him, and therefore was not prepared to meet him; certain it is, she never felt herself so much at a loss for something to say; she could not even tell him that she was glad to see him; she hesitated, trembled, coloured; and though she had long looked forward to this meeting, as to certain happiness, yet, now, enigmatical as it may appear, she would have given the world, had it taken place at any other moment than the present.

In struggling to recover her composure, she lost seeing the effect this meeting had on Montague. His countenance was animated with surprise and pleasure, and betrayed, more than his words, the delight he experienced at seeing her. So much was every thought engrossed by her presence that he totally forgot that she was not the only person he came to see, or that there was any one else  
who



who had any claim to his remembrance, until Angelina reminded him of it, by expressing her sorrow that Lady Eldwin was absent, and the rest of the family.

He then recollected to inquire after them.—He thought Angelina improved in her person;—had it been the contrary, he would have thought the same, for she could put on no change that could injure her in his eyes. After the surprise of meeting was over, he began to inquire of her, very minutely, how she had passed her time since he had last seen her; and was delighted to hear her ingenuously confess how little gratification she received in the unmeaning round of fashionable amusements. She gave him a description of the characters of those who visited at the Crescent; and told him, with her usual frankness, what she thought of each of them.

“ Then you were not sorry when you left Bath ?” said Montague.

“ When I first arrived there, I was enchanted by its gaities, and could not help regretting that I had been so long a stranger to such scenes.”

“ And so soon to be disgusted with them; my sweet friend !”

“ When the novelty of them was over,” she continued, “ I found no enjoyment in them ; for, as each day passed away, and I reflected on the manner in which I had spent my time, something seemed to whisper me—that I might have filled it up better.”

“ Indeed !” said Montague, with surprise: “ I should have imagined that the variety of characters you met with would have afforded you an endless source of amusement;—they must have been entirely new to you.”

Angelina smiled—“ And so they were ; for I had no idea that there were people, whose whole time was taken up in studying to make themselves appear ridiculous !—

culous! —But this was not all; every one seemed to be driving after Pleasure, only for the sake of hunting her out of society.”

“ How was that ?” asked he.

“ When there is so much envy among people, that *one* cannot endure to see *another* happy; when the slightest foibles are artfully drawn forth, and placed in such a point of view, as to make them appear like glaring deformities; when every body is endeavouring to build their fame on the ruin of others; and each person’s conduct is regulated by the nicest rules of art—how is it possible that it should produce happiness?—When I heard some flattering, in public, those whom in secret they despised—what a pity, *thought I*, that we must not rely upon *one another*, and in a place where every thing, which art or nature can frame, seems united to give us pleasure, should be converted into such a scene of discontent and vexation by the divided interest which subsists among us !”

“How came Miss Aubrey to make these reflections?”

“Having been accustomed,” she answered, “to contemplate the *harmony* of Nature’s works, I was struck with the *discord* that presented itself here, and could not help wondering why they did not profit by her lessons in the moral world.”

“How would it be possible for such a pure system to exist, where there is such a variety of character?”

“Do you think, Mr. Montague, that Nature offered happiness to us, as the water was set before Tantalus, only to be looked at? Are there not natural ills enough to chequer the scene, without setting our wits to work to give pain to one another?”

Montague smiled—“I wish you could make *every one* think so.”

“*Every*

"*Every one does !*" she answered. " Is it not the commonest thing in the world to hear people railing against Deceit, as if they were all determined to hunt it out of society? And whilst they all talk of the evil consequences it produces, there is scarce one among them that does not practice it in some shape or other."

" These are very different sentiments to what Miss Aubrey entertained when I last saw her."

" *Then*, Mr. Montague, I had not been introduced to the great world," said she, smiling.

" I hope, when you become better acquainted with it," he resumed, " you will find you have judged rashly: there are many people in it, who appear less amiable than they really are—they are betrayed by fashion into the affectation of faults."



“ Indeed !—But how am I to distinguish the one from the other,” she asked, “ when both appear in the same point of view ?”

This was a question Montague was puzzled to answer. “ You would not rank them together ?”

“ Not if I knew how to make a distinction between them. The one who *appears* to act wrong, impresses me with the same idea as the other does ; and, whilst example has such a powerful effect upon us all, the former is very little less an enemy to society than the latter. There are people who have surmounted the most rooted prejudices, by using themselves to look upon the object that produced it ; so those who familiarize themselves to think of vice without fear, are very likely, by habit, to practise it.”

“ Then you would not have any one subscribe to the customs which are dictated by fashion ; but you rather would appear singular ?”

“By no means. I think *that* equally dangerous; merely pride and affectation. I would endeavour to accommodate myself to every reasonable custom; I would even sacrifice my pleasure to do so, rather than give offence to any one; but I would on no account allow it to interfere with my duty.”

“And have you courage,” said Montague, “openly to avow your love of reason?—Sweet excellence!—all that I expected from a mind like Miss Aubrey’s! I knew, when I parted with her at Gloucester, she would return the same unchanged and lovely character which I now find her! The generality of young people are introduced into the world before they have learned to reflect by what rule they are to regulate their conduct; they adopt the manners of those with whom they mix, without examining how far it may be justifiable, or not; they see those most courted who can entertain the company by lively conversation; and mistaking satire for wit, they are curious to learn every anecdote of their acquaintances, in order

that they may have something to repeat. If they chance to possess a fertile imagination, the story seldom goes off without additions of their own coining. Thus the fairest reputations are blasted, the dearest interests are divided; the most mischievous evils ensue from this wanton and cruel practice!—No matter in what rank or station in life, it is alike unbecoming in all; or if there is an aggravation of it, it is certainly with those who may be supposed to be refined by the advantages of education. I knew the gentleness of your nature would recoil at the unkindness with which people commonly treat each other; but do not infer from this superficial view of human manners, that it is the practice of *all: these* are rendered conspicuous by their glaring defects. Virtue is less seen; she is generally hid from the public gaze; and we often pass over lovely characters with indifference, as such places are seldom the hemisphere in which they shine.”

“ This

“ This is what puzzles me,” said she ;  
“ as if people were afraid of acting well.”

Montague smiled.—“ My sweet friend,” said he, taking her hand, “ forgets when she refused the steward in public, and afterwards that I watched her give him her money, when she thought herself unseen. How often have I thought,” he continued, “ of that morning, of the surprise, the delight I experienced in seeing you so amiably employed !”

“ Have you ever heard of the woman since ?” asked Angelina.

“ I was there,” he returned, “ about six weeks past, upon business. I went down in consequence of an estate that was to be sold in that part of the country, not many miles from East-Cliff.—It belonged to a distant relation of my father’s—It was from thence I was coming the first time I saw you, when we met under the oak. I looked at the poor old tree, when I was down there ; its leaves were faded, as if mourning your absence ;

— but I thought every object seemed changed.”

“ Did you see any thing, Sir, of Mr. Arden?”

“ I called at the Castle,” returned Montague, “ and chatted with the old gentleman some time. You know he is a man of few words; but, during our conversation, he spoke of you several times; earnestly blessed you; but seemed to fear you were in danger of being corrupted by the examples before you. There is something in his manner that interests me exceedingly: he seems to have bought his experience of the world very dear. I found the poor woman, you spoke of, doing vastly well, and the boys grown fine chubby fellows. I staid but a very few hours in the place, or I should have called on the Rector’s family.—Every scene seemed so changed, that I was glad to quit it: my spirits were not good, and I believe that was the reason.”

“ Low



“ Low spirits are so unusual with you, Mr. Montague, that I am afraid to ask the cause. I hope your family are all well.”

“ Yes, I thank you ; but may there not be other causes besides family concerns to occasion a depression of spirits ? ”

“ Certainly ; but I know none so likely as the former ; for when those we love are not happy, it is impossible for the mind to partake of any enjoyment.”

“ I hope those *I love* are happy,” said Montague, emphatically ; “ for sooner than wound *their* feelings, I would strive to hide the misery of my own, and deny myself the common gratification which is allowed the unhappy—the *privilege of complaining.*”

Angelina met his eyes beaming on her full of affection.—His manner was agitated, and it was with difficulty he could conceal how much he was affected.

"Is Mr. Eldwin at home?" he asked, rising to go.

Before Angelina could answer him, the latter was in the room. After they had chatted together some time, Mr. Eldwin walked up to Angelina, and taking out of his pocket a volume of poems—"I heard you say," said he, "that you had never read Beatie's Minstrell; you may now peruse them at your leisure; for they are your's," presenting them to her.

She hesitated whether to receive them or not; for she did not wish to be obliged by him.

"You don't intend to offend me Angelina? I bought them to please you: are there any other you would have liked better?"

Gratitude was a ruling passion in the bosom of Angelina; and, being hurt at giving him an opportunity of reproaching her, after he had taken the trouble to purchase the book, she took it; when, meeting Montague's eyes bent on her  
with

with an expression of sorrow, she was almost on the point of returning it.

He staid but a very few minutes after, and Mr. Eldwin, saying he had business in Westminster, went out with him.

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CHAP. II.

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ANGELINA's eyes followed them to the door, and, as it closed after them, she gently articulated—"And is all the happiness I have anticipated come to this? Fond, foolish heart! thou hast been laying snares for thine own peace, by cherishing hopes that must never be realized! But as this evil has been of thine own courting, thy punishment shall be to struggle with it in silence; for sooner mayest thou break," cried she, "than forfeit thy right to Montague's esteem. He is bound in honour to fulfil other engagements, and never shall his noble mind debase itself through me. I will learn, from his example, the necessity of sacrificing to duty that happiness which would be but partially enjoyed without self-approving virtue for its foundation; I will shun all occasions of talking with him; not a word shall ever escape my lips, that  
may

may lead him to suppose that I ever cherished a thought of him more than his friendship for the family might justify. Mrs. Beverly once told me, that every difficulty might be overcome, by a steady perseverance, and cheerful exertion; for there was no evil which we had to encounter, but what there was an equal power given us (if we chose to exert it) to combat with. But *virtue*, like every other good, must be sought after; and though, in the pursuit, we may sometimes meet with sorrow and disappointment, it will always be found to reward us in the acquisition. I will remember thy precepts, dear and much-regretted mistress!" said Angelina, fervently, "and every night, when I retire to my chamber, I will ask my heart, if I have practised them. When I am in sorrow, I will seek comfort in the rectitude of my intentions; and the reflection that Montague has not rendered himself unworthy through me, shall soothe my mind into peace with itself."—These resolves were interrupted by the return of the ladies. Lady Isabella Irwin remained



mained with them; and at dinner they were joined by Mr. Montague.

When they retired from the table, Montague left the gentlemen to their bottle, and followed Ethelind, who, with Angelina, had taken Lady Isabella into the music room. He had recovered his spirits to appear, if not so happy, not less cheerful than usual. He was uniformly polite, friendly, and attentive to all; but there was a degree of tenderness in his manner, whenever he addressed Angelina, that, fearful of encouraging, she shunned all occasions of talking with him.

“Well, Mr. Montague,” cried Ethelind, “you find my fair cousin, after all my documents, just the same simple, unperturbed, good creature you left her. I have taken much pains to persuade her that thinking is very unfashionable; however, she has paid much more attention to your lessons than to mine, so I have given up the task of teaching her; but that is no reason why *you* should,” she continued, smiling archly; “for perhaps you  
have

have brought with you some *new instructions*."

"Nay, then," said he, "it will be a work of supererrogation to bestow them on *Miss Aubrey*: she is perfect enough; perhaps if I were to bestow them on *you*, indeed, it might be a work of *charity*."

"Pshaw!" said Ethelind; "but to be serious—you would have had a glorious opportunity of trying your skill at Bath. Angelina was in great want of your advice; for all that we could say was urged in vain, in favour of a young Baronet. Now, had you been there, she would have been, ~~By~~ this time, Lady Francis Twisdell. Don't you think, Montague, that you could have persuaded her to have married him?"

"I think no power would ever persuade Miss Aubrey to do wrong," said he; "and, I hope, I should have been the last to have tried my influence on such an occasion; for I should have a very poor opinion of that lady's heart, who would  
sacrifice

sacrifice herself to a man who had no interest in it, for the sake of a title ! It must be a little mind, indeed, that would barter its peace for a name !”

“ All that is very true, to be sure ; but, then, you know, compassion is one of the best affections ; and you are such an advocate for the virtues, that I am sure you would not have let slip so fair an opportunity of exercising your’s. I should have liked vastly to have heard you reasoning with Angelina upon the virtue of rescuing Sir Francis from despair ! Besides, he is a pupil of the Chesterfield school ; quite a Jemmy Jeffamy ; and what a meritorious act it would have been to have married him, if only to have had the merit of converting him into a reasonable being ! Don’t you think so ?”

“ No, upon my word, I do not,” said he, smiling.

“ Oh, *you don’t !*” cried Ethelind. “ I did not know that you ever permitted self-

self-interest to govern *you*. I thought *you* would have gloried in mortifying your passions, and, like a *Bon Catholique*, borne with calm dignity the torture of seeing Angelina married to another. Pray," she continued, turning to Miss Aubrey, "have the goodness to put down my music book, or I shall not be able to make out a note; you are twirling the leaves to pieces. Do tell me what you are thinking of."

Here the entrance of some of the rest of the family gave relief to Angelina, who had suffered no small degree of embarrassment from Ethelind's raillery.

The gentlemen proposed going to Drury-lane theatre, to see the tragedy of the Gamester. It was gladly acceded to by the ladies; and Mr. Eldwin, saying he would meet them there, committed Angelina to the care of Montague. This, to the former, was both painful and unexpected: she felt an awkwardness in being singled out as an object of his solicitude; but Montague was grave, and thoughtful;

thoughtful; he seemed to observe a distant and formal behaviour towards her, that was more the effect of a studied reserve, than that coldness which results from any change of sentiment.

In the scene where Stukely is endeavouring to seduce the wife of his friend, by poisoning her mind with false assertions on her husband,—Angelina turned to Sir Edward, who sat next to her, and, with a natural horror of the character, feelingly exclaimed—"Oh! how improbable, Sir,—it is painting human nature *too black*; for who could have the heart to ruin the peace of his friend?—I cannot bear it," said she, bursting into tears; "why did we come to see it?"—"Don't be so childish," said Sir Edward; what should you know of the world? It is one of the most excellent moral lessons that we have on the stage. It is a play every one should see, for the *characters* are exceedingly natural."

"*Natural, Sir!*" she replied, with surprise: "then I am sorry I came; for, otherwise,  
wife,



wife, I should never have known that such hearts existed. *That Stukely* quite frightens me in the representation; and what should I feel, if it was more than an illusion!—I would not know such a wretch for the world!”

“ Silence,” said he, angrily, and stood up to prevent her saying more.

But Angelina’s heart was in the piece; now melting with pity, now swelling with indignation, and now harrowed up by conflicting emotions, until she was in agony. At the end of the fourth act she turned to Sir Edward, and, with an earnest simplicity in her manner, asked —“ If he had ever seen this play before ?”

“ Most assuredly,” he answered. “ I have seen it often.”

“ And did you *always* think, Sir, that *Stukely’s* character was a *natural* one ?”

“ Why

“ Why do you ask so much about *him* in particular?—why do you point out that *villain* ?” said he, fiercely.

“ I only thought,” she returned, somewhat astonished by his manner—“ that, by your saying it was a natural character, in your long intercourse with the world, you might have been unhappy enough to have known such a one.”

“ You suppose then,” said he, sternly, “ that I have kept company with villains !”

“ Dear Sir, what a horrible thought !” she cried : “ you make me shudder !”

“ Then why do you point out such objects to me ?—There are characters far more interesting, and such as I should have thought would have excited your attention :—the females of the piece are examples for every lady’s imitation.”

“ Certainly they are,” said Angelina ;  
“ but, perhaps, my never having heard  
of

of, or seen such a person as Stukely, occasioned me to make the exclamation I did.—I wonder, uncle," she continued, " what a man, who had acted such a part as this upon the world's stage, would feel at seeing this horrid character represented; for, if *we* behold him with fear and indignation, what must be *his* feelings upon this review of himself, when conscience whispered him it was his own?—Dear Sir," cried she, looking up at him earnestly—" how pale you are—you are not well, I fear !"

" Pshaw," said he, "*I am very well ;* what should ail me?"—His looks bore no testimony to the truth of this assertion ; for, as he held the opera-glass to his eye, his hand shook violently.

Angelina said no more ; for she feared to irritate him :—she saw him universally agitated, and, just before the conclusion of the last scene, he went abruptly out of the box.

When they quitted the theatre, Lady Isabella Irwin took Angelina's place in the coach; and, as Mr. Eldwin had not kept his appointment, but, requested Montague to take charge of the latter, she returned with him in his carriage.

The fate of the Gamester was too awful a lesson not to leave a strong impression on the mind of Angelina.

Montague said, during their ride—  
“ You must not come to witness such tragical scenes again.”

“ They were so naturally expressed,” she cried, that I forgot they were fictitious. I am afraid I made myself look very foolish—I was too much interested in the scene, to remember that any one saw me.”

“ Every one who saw you,” he returned, “ must have honoured you for your sensibility: in the artless expression of your grief, you looked more lovely than any of the ladies around you.”

“ Oh !

“ Oh! don't say so,” said she, earnestly; “ I am sure Ethelind felt as much as I did; but she has a command over her feelings, which I, unhappily, have not:—she has excellent spirits; and, by those who are not acquainted with her, they are frequently interpreted to her disadvantage; but you are very much mistaken, if you suppose that she has not a very good heart.—In my opinion, she has thrice the merit of those who have been more carefully instructed, for the cultivation of her mind was never thought of.”

“ Is Miss Aubrey always thus favourable in her judgment?”

“ If I am *favourable* to her,” she answered, “ it is because I have experienced, in her conduct towards me, such proofs of a good heart, that the most impartial observer must have given credit to. When I came into the family, I was a stranger to them all; and Ethelind has always observed a delicacy towards



me, that, when I cease to remember, I shall never deserve to meet with again."

"There is too much goodness in Miss Aubrey's nature, ever to forget the slightest favour conferred on her; but if you, my *sweet friend*," said Montague, "cannot command love and attention, to whom shall it be paid?"

Angelina, wishing to change the subject, asked him "if he knew any thing of the gentleman who came into their box after the play?"

"You mean Mr. Walpole's nephew, Sir Frederick Marsdale," he returned.—  
"I am acquainted with him through Lord Algernon, who has known his family many years. But, why do you ask?" he continued.

"He was with us," said she, "this morning, in Park Place, on business with Sir Edward; and there was a peculiar frankness in his manner, that made Ethelind

kind and myself curious to know his character."

"He is a very clever, and a very excellent young man," said Montague; "though, sometimes, from a disregard to the opinions of others, your polished gentry may think him a little too free in what he utters; but, even on these occasions, I have seen him come off with a very good grace. It is his nature to say what he thinks; and every one who is acquainted with his character expects it from him—but there is so much good humour even in this freedom, that the severest things he utters cannot give reasonable offence.

"Has he a father?" asked Angelina.

"No—he has been dead some years; he has a mother, and three sisters, very amiable women.—For an only son, his fortune is by no means large; but he is in expectation of something considerable at the death of a relation; and what little

his uncle possesses, no doubt will be his hereafter."

Angelina spoke of Mr. Walpole with that warmth which his virtues inspired.—  
"I wonder," said she, "if he was ever married?"

"I believe not," said Montague.—"I understand that, when he was young, he was engaged to an amiable woman, but her friends sacrificed her to a man of less merit, but more wealth, than Mr. Walpole; and the disappointment he met with on this occasion, determined him never to expose himself to a second of the kind; he therefore resolved to live single. He is one of the best characters I know: he unites all the christian virtues, without the ostentation of wishing to *appear* better than other men."

"What a pity," said Angelina, "that his peace should have been thus wantonly, and cruelly destroyed. The benevolence of his nature, indeed, will make him  
him

him partake of others' happiness, if he has none of his own."

"That is true," said Montague; "but, when a man's whole heart is devoted to an amiable and lovely woman; when he would gladly encounter every evil in life, rather than lose the fond hope of seeing her his wife; when all the happiness of the present and future depend upon her, it is no easy matter to accommodate his mind to the misery of seeing her devoted to another;—even when it happens that honour divides them, the task is very, *very* difficult; it throws a shade over his future life, that neither time nor circumstances can entirely chase away; it leaves him to contemplate the happiness he had once in view, with the melancholy certainty of never being permitted to possess it."

There was a degree of expression in Montague's manner, which said much more than his words.

"But it is, surely," said Angelina, "a most reprehensible weakness, voluntarily

tarily to submit the mind to the impressions of sorrow, without exerting ourselves, in some degree, to subdue them. I think the noblest piece of heroic virtue is, in combating with our disappointments."

"Then tell me, my sweet friend," he cried, "how to accomplish it; for, if you knew at this moment how I am exposed, and how difficult I find it to govern my present feelings, you would, in compassion, teach me the lesson."

"You can never want instructions, Mr. Montague; for, whilst you feel the *necessity* of acting right, you will need no other stimulus."

Angelina spoke with a courage, that the urgency of the moment only could have inspired.

"What you say, is undeniably right," rejoined he: "would that I could profit by it."

She



She was touched by the energy with which he spoke: there was a degree of passionate feeling in his manner, that awakened all her tenderness; but, recovering herself, with much presence of mind, she said, as calmly as she could—  
 “To avoid what may be a temporary relief to the mind, seems a lesson harsh in its precepts, though necessary in its observance; but, without some exertion of our own, no difficulty is to be overcome—and I should think it better to make a sacrifice, at once, of momentary happiness, rather than, by an enervating indulgence, expose the mind to future misery; or, what is still worse, to temptations incompatible with the strict principles of right.”

“I understand your meaning,” he answered; “and you shall find that I will profit by your advice: but little do you know of Montague, if you imagine his life is dearer to him than your safety and welfare! I hold the laws of friendship and hospitality too sacred to break through either:—the honour and happiness

of my friend, is as dear to me as my own; and Heaven forbid that I should forfeit my title to the one, or excite indignation, by treacherously destroying the other."

They were silent for some minutes—Angelina wished to say something, but she could not command one word. By this time they had reached Sir Edward's."

Montague was too much hurried to appear before the family; and, after handing Angelina out, he pressed her hand in silence, and turned hastily from her.

The moment she was left without the restraint his presence imposed, she gave vent to her feelings:—whilst he was present, she supported her part with all the dignity of a mind resolving to act with propriety; but when he was gone—gone, too, with an impression of her severity, without one syllable to soften it—she almost repented of her conduct; till, recollecting the motive that influenced her,  
she

she became reconciled to herself, and prudently resolved to persevere.

The best determinations have been frequently formed under the influence of strong feelings; but, when the hour of energy is past, the stimulus to persevere in its laudable resolves passes with it; and the resolution to put them in practice is too often lost.

Much, however, to the honour of Angelina, she maintained her's with the strictest observance, though she had frequent occasion to call forth all her strength of mind to fortify it against the repeated trials it was exposed to, by the frequency of Montague's visits. Every time she saw him, confirmed her in her former opinion, that he was engaged in honour to another.

Had Montague known the motives of her conduct, it would have rendered her more interestingly lovely than all the beauty and amiable qualities which had engaged his affections; but, even this

he was unacquainted with her struggles were confined to her own breast, and she was content to receive her only reward in the approbation of her own heart. But, notwithstanding this exertion, her spirits were not equal to this mental warfare. In his presence she strove to appear gay and happy; but the moment she was out of the reach of observation, she became pensive and melancholy. So little was she practiced in any species of dissimulation, that even a common observer might soon have discerned that her spirits were but assumed and not springing from their genuine source—a tranquil and peaceful mind.

During this period she was frequently perplexed by Mr. Eldwin's conduct. Before Montague, he behaved to her with far more familiarity than in the presence of any other person; yet, she had no reason to think that Mr. Eldwin meant any thing by this conduct; for since their arrival in London, not a look, nor word, had escaped him, that she  
could

could apply to his former sentiments; and she began to conclude, that the little encouragement she had given to his addresses, had determined him to give over all thoughts of her. In this security she treated him with less and less reserve.

During this period Sir Frederick Marsdale had called several times, without receiving any decisive answer from Sir Edward in respect to the living of East-Cliff; when Angelina received a letter from Lucy Summers, to intreat her to interfere with her uncle in Mr. Wilmot's behalf. It contained a melancholy account of her mother's health, which, she wrote, was fast declining: she represented their uneasiness at not having obtained any direct answer from Sir Edward, and their fears lest young Wilmot should lose the rectorship; and, with an earnest simplicity, intreated Angelina to represent his amiable qualities, and the disappointment it would occasion her *mother* if the living was given to any other person.

Had



Had Angelina been compelled to ask a favour of Sir Edward for herself, she would have hesitated, and applied to him in fear; but, the moment she read this letter, thoughtless of the consequences that might ensue from her interference, with the most happy assurance of success she hastened to Sir Edward, thinking that the same motive which urged *her* to make the request, would incite *him* to grant it. With a countenance animated with the hope of having it in her power to render them happy, she entered the library; and, with an earnestness that was sincerely felt, she told him her errand, and gave him Lucy's letter to read. He was writing when she entered, and, slightly looking it over, he put it up.

Angelina saw the impending frown, and began to tremble for what would follow. After a moment's pause, he said, angrily, "Why do you interfere in what does not concern you?"

"Indeed,

“ Indeed, Sir,” she resumed, “ I am very much interested for them.”

“ And what for?” he asked ; the colour mounting in his face : “ what obligations do you owe them, that you dare risk my displeasure by this frequent mention of their names ? If you are indebted to them for all the benefits you have received, go to them ; but do not insult me to my face, by preferring their interest to mine.”

“ I did not know that, by interfering, I should risk your displeasure.—I thought,” she continued, “ that you were unacquainted with the disappointment it would occasion them, if you persisted in withholding the living.—Dear Sir, *must* I say that you are determined—”

“ Now that you *do know* it,” said he, “ you seem regardless whether you risk it or not, by your interposing again. What do *you* know,” he continued, raising his voice, “ of their family, to cause this emotion ? What are they to *you*, that you feel so much more for them than for me ?

me? Do you dispute my right to judge for myself? or do you think I act without a sufficient reason? Am I to be called to an account by those who are dependant on my favour? They have been poisoning your mind with false aspersions on my character;—let them look to it!" said he, unguarded by his passions. "All they have told you is false! By Heaven, they have no foundation for their suppositions!—Curse their suspicions," he continued, pacing the room with increased agitation; when, seizing the arm of the astonished girl in a manner which made her tremble, and with a voice choaked by contending emotions—"Tell me," he cried, "all they have ever told you, as you value your own peace: withhold not from me what they have said to you relating to ——" he hesitated, and striking his forehead in agony and confusion—"tell me all you know of their family connections."

Angelina knew nothing more than what Lucy Summers had told her, whilst she

she visited at the rectory, which she now repeated almost word for word.

During this recital Sir Edward's countenance underwent many changes; but when she ended, and he found, by the extreme simplicity of her manner in relating it, that she was ignorant of the subject to which he alluded, he was relieved, by this assurance, from his former suspicions; though by no means relieved from the confusion his unnecessary fears had occasioned him.

Sir Edward was seldom reduced to the situation in which he now felt himself: he had art enough to veil his designs from the world, under the mask of dissimulation, and effectually to conceal them from his family in the deep intricacies of falsehood.

He could have borne the grossest indignities with composure; have listened to the vilest aspersions on his character, and treated them with contempt; would vindicate his conduct with all the confidence

dence of truth, though he was justly censured ; yet, now, in the presence of unsuspecting innocence, he knew not where to turn his eyes :—miserable reflection darted across his brain ; whilst conscience whispered to his troubled mind—“ There is no peace for the guilty !”

A pause of some minutes ensued.

Angelina glanced her eyes to the place where he stood : she trembled at the visible disorder his countenance betrayed, and hastily withdrew them. He stood an awful example of the certain consequences of guilt.

Led on by Ambition, step by step, he ascended with fear and trembling ; and whenever she offered him happiness, he lost the enjoyment of it by the terror he felt, as he contemplated the means by which he had striven to attain it.

Riches and Pleasure are the two principal seducers which betray men into the commission of criminal deeds ; when they  
have



have once lured the mind from the strict path of rectitude, evil upon evil progressively leads them on till they are plunged into absolute guilt: every action is then modified according as it tends to the attainment of one, or both, of these ends; every law, moral or divine, is offered up a willing sacrifice at the shrine of Ambition. The advantages of prosperity, even when innocently obtained, how uncertain are they in enjoyment! Then, how fallacious must be that hope of enjoyment, and how illusive those pleasures, which are obtained by the guilty!

Sir Edward was now tormented by his reflections—tortured by his fears, in the plenitude of wealth—a bankrupt, in the riches of an uncorrupted heart: yet, in the public eye, he was esteemed, not only a prosperous and a happy man, but also an object of universal envy: so little is the world qualified to judge, by exterior appearances, of what is happiness or misery: for what availed him, that he could boast of riches? His vanity, indeed, might be flattered for a moment by temporary gratifications;

tifications ; but where could he find relief from the corrodings of Conscience ? In the hour of retirement, her voice *will* be heard ! In the hour of dissolution, her voice *must* be answered !

To what an humiliating situation was he now reduced ! Fear is the inseparable companion of guilt ; and he, whose very glance could awe the family into obedience to his will, now dared not look up, lest he should encounter the mild scrutiny of Angelina's eyes ; lest she should penetrate into his thoughts, and there read the tormenting secret of his misery.

But suspicion had no place in her bosom : she read every body's heart by the purity of her own ; and, when he angrily bade her leave the room, she left it more sorrowful and hurt at his unprovoked contempt of Mrs. Summers' family, than suspicious that his determination was suggested by his guilty fears.

Sir Edward, too, quitted the library : he went up to his chamber in the bitterness

ness of his spirit, cursing his ill stars in not being able to conceal his emotion in the presence of Angelina; and though he had, himself, incurred the evils he complained of, he was impious enough to wonder for what purpose he was thus ever to be tortured on every trifling occasion.

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**CHAP. III.**

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**A**S Angelina crossed the hall, she caught a glimpse of Mr. Eldwin, and, unwilling that he should be a witness to her weakness, (for her eyes were full of tears) she would have shunned him; but he came up to her before she could retreat from his notice, and, kindly taking her by the hand, he said—"You have been weeping, Angelina! I have marked, with pain, for some time past, that you have been less happy than usual. If you have any secret uneasiness preying upon your spirits, speak to me with that openness which has always distinguished you. I hope I need not add, if it is in my power to relieve you, you may command me."

It was not what Mr. Eldwin said that encouraged Angelina to make him a party in the affair; but it was his manner; there was a sincerity in it that found its way

way to her heart, and, with her former frankness, she told him what had passed between her and his father. He bade her make herself easy; for that he would instantly go to Sir Edward, and try his influence over him:—"Don't fear," said he, seeing Angelina about to speak; "he shall not know that I have seen you;" and, with his earnestness to prove the sincerity of his words, he went immediately to put his promise in execution. She saw no more of him during the day; for neither Mr. Eldwin nor Sir Edward dined at home. In the evening Lady Eldwin received a large party.

Angelina, anxious to hear the success of Mr. Eldwin's embassy, would have been much better pleased had this route been given on any other night than the present, as she knew she had no chance of his joining them. Whilst she was regretting his absence, she received a message, by his servant, that he was waiting in the breakfast-parlour, and would be glad if she would withdraw herself from the  
company



company for a few moments, as he wished to speak with her.

The message was scarcely delivered before she was with him.

“ I thank you,” said he, as she entered the room, “ for your readiness to oblige me : you know my antipathy to mixing with your fashionable triflers ; such amusement may suit your sex very well ; but that men should enter into such frivolous pursuits, provokes both my wonder and indignation.”

When Mr. Eldwin begged Angelina's company, it was to speak to her on a subject in which he felt himself as much interested as his nature would admit of ; but when he heard in what manner the family was engaged, it awakened in his mind a new train of ideas, and he could not forbear to enter upon the old topic. After entertaining Angelina (but himself most), for upwards of ten minutes, with very wise remarks upon the follies of the present age, he happily recollected that  
he

he had another subject to discuss, that more immediately belonged to them both. He then acquainted her, that, after they separated in the morning, he went immediately to his father, and used all his persuasion to interest him in Mr. Wilmot's favour. "I found him," said Mr. Eldwin, "in an uncommonly gloomy temper of mind; his reserve rendered him almost inaccessible; he asked me some questions, as extraordinary as the terms he offered on which I was to obtain the living for your friend. I own I was staggered; but, recollecting how much you seemed interested for them, I readily agreed to his request; and, this evening, I have dispatched letters to Mr. Wilmot, to assure him that the living is his."

Angelina never thought that Mr. Eldwin appeared half so interesting as at this moment. His readiness to oblige the Summers' family awakened in her mind a lively gratitude towards him, that was forcibly expressed in every feature of her countenance. "How good you are!" she

cried. Now Mrs. Summers and Lucy will be happy!"

"To make *you* so," said he, "was my aim," taking her hand affectionately. "My father," he continued, "is very anxious to see you married; he has frequently hinted this to me. This morning your name being mentioned, he spoke of it again, that it was not only to see you settled that he was solicitous, but equally so to see you happy.—Surprised out of my usual reserve, I exclaimed, 'Then give her to me, Sir; for no one loves her with half the tenderness that I do.' A faint smile, I thought, spread over Sir Edward's features, in spite of his endeavouring to conceal it, that looked more like a secret approbation of my sentiments than I expected from him. 'You know your own heart best,' said my father; 'don't be rash; take time to consider of it. You might have singled out an object, however, less pleasing to me.' We dined together, and, during our conversation, I related to him the whole  
3 progress

progress of my affection for you, my determination of marrying you, and my reason for concealing it from the family. He then very liberally promised to settle something handsome on you, independent of my allowance, which will now be very considerably augmented."

All the pleasure, the gratitude, Angelina felt a moment before, now vanished, and gave place to fear, surprise, and disappointment; she never felt so little in her own esteem; for she now saw the sincerity of Mr. Eldwin's passion, and trembled when she reflected how long she had permitted him to remain deceived. She stood some moments in silent confusion, till Mr. Eldwin talked of the necessity of their marriage taking place as soon as possible. This roused her, and, catching his arm, in a hurried tone, she cried—"Hear me, Sir; for I can bear to deceive you no longer; and that I have let you one moment remain ignorant of my sentiments, is a weakness I shall never stand excused for, though I can, with the greatest sincerity, declare,

I never harboured a thought designedly to give you pain.—I have always esteemed you as a brother,” she cried; “then do not think me less grateful for this distinguishing mark of your affection, when I tell you, that, in a nearer light than that of a *brother*, my heart will never acknowledge you.”

He frowned, and started.

“I know what you would say,” said Angelina; “but you cannot behold my conduct in a more reprehensible light than I view it myself. Had you been more explicit, I should have been more open. I don’t admit that this is any excuse for me; but it would be adding guilt to folly to forfeit my sincerity, by giving you my hand whilst I withhold my heart, and at the same time endanger your peace of mind for ever.”

It was with difficulty Mr. Eldwin restrained his anger whilst she was speaking.—“Artful as the most dangerous of your sex!” he cried, passionately: “was  
it



it for *this* that I condescended to attach myself to you? Was it for *this* you put on the bewitching garb of simplicity and innocence, until my heart yielded to your charms? Say that you never encouraged my addresses—refuse my offered hand, though my father kneels to you to accept it—and you will not surprise me! Why was I fool enough to believe you better than the rest of your sex? Ye are all dissemblers in nature; nursed up from your very infancy in art and dissimulation! But no matter; the charm is broken, and never shall you enter my heart again, otherwise than in the form of Ingratitude!”

The bitterness of his invectives roused Angelina's mind from sinking under the weight of its own reproaches. Indignation, for his unworthy suspicions of her, held pre-eminence there; and she listened with a silent dignity to his passionate exclamations, that even surprised Mr. Eldwin. She did not offer any farther apology for her conduct, and it was some time after he was gone before she was sensible of his absence: tears then came to her re-

lief; and, as reflection gradually stole upon her mind, she beheld all the misery of her situation,—“And is it possible,” said she, “that Sir Edward sanctions his choice? If he commands me to marry Mr. Eldwin, what alternative have I?—to whom shall I fly? Is there one person upon earth on whom I have any claim for protection? Then how can I resolve to bid defiance to his declared commands, when his very glance can awe me into obedience? Do I not owe to him all the benefits I have received from my youth? In my earliest years, Mrs. Beverly impressed upon my mind the duty and love I now feel for him. If I was indebted to him then, how much more am I now, when his tenderness and protection has made me forget that I am fatherless!—That he should take so lively an interest in my welfare, implies that I have some claim on his affections. Then surely he will not insist upon my sacrificing my happiness to Mr. Eldwin!”—But her heart sunk within her, when she reflected upon the influence he held over the family; and the idea of being devoted to  
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the latter, brought with it a terror to her mind, that almost overpowered it. Unable to support her spirits to appear composed, she went up to her chamber. Here a faint hope beamed through the gloom of the prospect—Mr. Eldwin might be too much offended with her to persevere in his intentions: since he viewed her conduct in such odious colours, his anger might supersede his affection, and he might voluntarily renounce all thoughts of her. The morning convinced her how little she knew of Mr. Eldwin's heart—He went immediately to Sir Edward, to beg he would exert his influence over her:—he represented Angelina's conduct as ungrateful and capricious; and, after charging her with every foible that could render her contemptible in the eyes of a man of nice feeling, he said, "He felt that he could give her up without a pang; yet he was not satisfied till Sir Edward had given him his word that he would use his authority over her, by, at all events, uniting her to him."

This sophistry veiled the real sentiments of Mr. Eldwin's heart from himself, though it was too thin a covering to elude the penetration of Sir Edward.— He justly saw how much his son's happiness depended on this union; and what urged him *infinitely* more to forward it, was, he knew how much his own future peace rested on its completion.

He sent for Angelina to attend him in his study. She listened to the summons with fear; she dreaded to encounter the severity he had lately assumed.

The moment she entered where he was, his attention was excited by the paleness and langour of her countenance; and he spoke to her in a tone of tenderness and solicitude that she was not prepared to meet, and overpowered her more than his anger could have done.

After a silence of some moments, he said, "That you have always been an object of my fondest solicitude, Angelina, I think I need not inform you; for, from  
the

the hour that I first took you under my protection, to the present, neither pains nor expence have been spared to render your future life happy and virtuous.—When I look round, and contemplate the miseries that await unprotected innocence, I feel a secret satisfaction in having shielded your orphan state from such exposures; nor do I hesitate to tell you, that I feel rewarded by seeing my endeavours crowned with success. I heard the most favourable account of you from Mrs. Beverly, and you have realized my fondest expectations.”

Here Angelina wept bitterly; gratitude, tenderness, and regret, strove in her mind alike for pre-eminence.

“ I will now reveal to you a truth,” he resumed, “ which has hitherto been buried in my own breast :—I brought you into my family, Angelina, to see you the wife of my son.—”

A faintness came over her, and she was forced to lean against a chair for support.



“ I knew Mr. Eldwin’s temper,” continued Sir Edward, “ too well, to impart this secret to him. Young people are too apt to think that the influence of a parent, in such instances, fetters the mind ; whereas, a free election they consider as the first blessing that can be bestowed. I saw that he could not behold you long with indifference : the event proved my sentiments to be just. I marked his growing affection for you with a satisfaction which I carefully avoided betraying : I thought I beheld a return of it in your conduct towards him, and I fondly hoped to see the first wish of my heart accomplished. Now, Angelina, it rests entirely with you. You have often expressed your duty and affection for me ; but as the finest sentiments are but words, which may be uttered without any meaning, I now call upon you for the only test of your sincerity, and expect to find your actions confirm my faith in your virtues. It is a father who asks it of you, for the happiness of his son, in which your own welfare is included. Promise me, then, to return his affection ;

fection;—say that you will become his wife.”

“What an alternative!” she cried. “Must I plunge myself into misery and guilt, as the only test of my sincerity?—for guilt it will be to promise him my hand, whilst my whole heart rejects the idea of his love”!

“If you had reflected thus,” said Sir Edward, “before, and not permitted him to remain ignorant of your meaning, he would never have allowed his affection for you to have interposed with his happiness.”

There was a severe truth in this reproach that made her bitterly feel the weakness of her late conduct.

Sir Edward continued—“I know that young women of your age are more easily captivated by the sprightliness of wit and gaiety, than by the sober manners of men of understanding:—the former flatters your vanity, by uttering a

number of very fine compliments on your beauty, while the latter pays a much higher respect to your mind, by treating you as reasonable beings. If Mr. Eldwin was a man with whom I thought you would be unhappy, I should be the last to commit you to his protection, though he is my son. Look, Angelina, at most young men of his age, and you will find *his* little foibles vanish before their enormities.—If he has a few eccentricities, remember he has no vices.—He loves you with tenderness; his whole happiness depends upon this union, though not more than his father's;—for, if you refuse him, I do not scruple to tell you, that you will expose me to much misery.—But, no matter,” cried he, after a pause, affecting to appear composed, and sighing deeply; “I have met with nothing but ingratitude all my life long; therefore I am not surprised at finding you like the rest of the world.—Oh! God!” said he, emphatically, “was it for *this* I snatched you in your infancy from misery, to plant thorns in my own bosom, and destroy the happiness of my son!—

son!—" Sir Edward was well acquainted with Angelina's heart; he had touched the string on which hung all her gratitude; every affecting remembrance of his past tenderness rushed upon her mind; and, in the ardour of the moment, she offered herself up a willing sacrifice, for the prospect of her own future misery vanished before the agonizing reflection of adding a pang to the heart of her benefactor.

After drawing from her a solemn promise to become the wife of his son, Sir Edward raised her from his feet; for, in the fervour of gratitude, she had knelt there.—He soothed her with assurances of his unabating regard, and promised to prepare Lady Eldwin to receive her as her future daughter-in-law.

Angelina had long been in doubt respecting her birth:—it now seemed to her proper, that she should be made acquainted with her situation. This appeared the most favourable moment for  
making

making such a request; and, after some hesitation, she put the question to him.

“ I forbade you to mention it,” said he. As he spoke, his countenance assumed all its wonted austerity; and, after standing for upwards of five minutes, as one lost in thought, he started; and, without speaking, went hastily out of the room.



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CHAP. IV.

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ANGELINA went up to her chamber in silent anguish. She had yielded, in the fervour of gratitude, to a request, which her cooler thoughts would not justify; but, it was a promise given past recal. The full extent of her misery burst upon her view; she saw herself betrayed into an engagement, whilst the necessity and the horror of fulfilling it appeared equally before her. She reflected on the difference of her feelings now, and when she first came into Sir Edward's family: then her lively fancy gazed with unsatiated delight upon the wide prospect of happiness that opened before her; now, how the scene was changed!—all the bright views which fancy pourtrayed were faded!—and all the flattering hopes of future happiness lost in disappointment! “Is this the world,”

world," said she, "that my imagination painted in such brilliant colours? Was it for this I looked forward with such impatience to enter it?"—Tears filled her eyes as she contemplated the faded picture; and her ardent mind deemed itself for ever unhappy. "Who would have thought," sighed Angelina, "that by deluding myself, from day to day, with a determination to speak to Mr. Eldwin on the next, that I was heaping upon my future existence such accumulated misery? If a neglect of so trifling a duty is followed by such serious consequences, how does it instruct us to be watchful over the smallest deviation!"

"Then, since I have drawn this evil, in a great measure, on myself, I will endeavour to accommodate my mind to Mr. Eldwin's wishes. After what has passed, it is not unreasonable that he should expect this sacrifice from me."

Thus several days passed. Mr. Eldwin saw the silent anguish that was wringing the heart of Angelina;—his  
pride

pride was gratified as he beheld her anxiety to establish herself in his good opinion. He was not so great a stranger to her sentiments as she imagined; for, from his first declaring his passion for her, he had penetration to discover the little interest he held in her heart; for this reason he had shunned giving her an opportunity of refusing him; artfully deluding her, till, by his equivocal conduct, he had persuaded her into a belief of her having deceived him.

It was the first piece of artifice he had ever practised:—his mind was not formed for deceit; and, like every other borrowed habit, it did not sit easy upon him.

He had been informed of the promise Sir Edward had wrung from her; and, in this security, he treated her with a perfect indifference.

Her Ladyship said but little on this subject; but her manner towards Angelina conveyed a degree of asperity,  
more

more insulting to the feelings, than all the indignities which language could have uttered.

Ethelind did not scruple to say, "That she thought her brother's conduct was more artful than affectionate;" but these were sentiments she dared not utter in the presence of her father. She very thoughtlessly told Angelina, "That she had rallied Montague into an avowal of his long attachment to her; and learned all the particulars attending it. He confessed, 'That on his first seeing Miss Aubrey at East-Cliff, he was struck with involuntary admiration; and that, when he became better acquainted with her, her chaste and simple manners charmed and delighted him; and she soon appeared to him the most interesting object he had ever seen.' At that time, he had reason to suspect that Mr. Eldwin was attached to her; and, with a generosity that marked all his actions, he strove to repel all thoughts of her, till he was convinced he could with honour indulge them; for this reason, he made his sentiments

sentiments immediately known to Mr. Eldwin; who, without giving him a decisive answer, just said sufficient to perplex his judgement; and, to prevent him from making an immediate and frank avowal of his passion, he endeavoured to abstract his thoughts from Angelina, but the effort was ineffectual; for, whilst he contemplated the virtues of her mind, it opened to him a prospect of future happiness that promised the most permanent felicity. When he left her at Gloucester, in the moment of separation he betrayed how much he suffered in parting with her. It was then his intention to have rejoined them at Bath, but he was detained longer than he expected in London; and, feeling unequal to remaining in a state of suspense, he wrote to Mr. Eldwin, and insisted on knowing his real sentiments in regard to Angelina. This request was too serious to be trifled with, and the former, when he returned an answer, went so far as to say, that she was actually engaged to him. Till this moment, Montague owned that he knew not how much his happiness depended



depended on her; and though honour forbade his cherishing a farther hope of her, yet he found that he had no prospect of regaining his former tranquility of mind.

Ethelind then repeated the surprise he had expressed upon the sudden alteration of Angelina's conduct towards him, soon after her return to town, when she no longer treated him with her former frankness, but, on the contrary, seemed studiously to avoid him. This, he feared, had arisen from the apparent ambiguity of his conduct at Gloucester:—he was constantly on the point of explaining to her the motives that at that time influenced him; but, fearful of trusting himself to talk with her on a subject that mastered all his feelings, he begged Ethelind to speak for him.

She then said, "That Montague purposed quitting London before her brother was married, as he acknowledged that he felt the necessity of flying their society."— She observed, that he appeared

peared greatly affected when he heard that it was to take place so soon.

This intelligence occasioned a severer conflict in the mind of Angelina, than any she had before experienced ; and, in the moment of agonizing reflection, it almost overpowered all her resolution : but she had bound herself by too sacred a tie to violate her promise with impunity.—Her grief was silent, but the inward anguish she endured threw an air of sadness over her, that rendered her sorrow more than commonly touching.

Sir Edward was the only one from whom she received any shew of tenderness.—He became gradually more chearful, and was continually heaping upon her some new favours ; his whole time was taken up in forming their establishment ; not any thing was withheld which he thought could afford her pleasure ; and had he been preparing to receive into his family a daughter of the first nobleman in the kingdom, he could not have been more solicitous to have her  
appear

appear in elegance and splendour. A house was taken for them in Portland-place, and an unlimited order given for every thing that could render it handsome and commodious.

Jewels, equipage, all that was necessary to support her in *style*, was prepared to usher into his family this child of obscurity.

But this glare of false splendour could not deceive Angelina into a hope of happiness; and whilst, in gratitude, she strove to approve, her heart sunk within her as she contemplated the misery that awaited her.

Ethelind was too happy herself to observe the silent anguish her young friend endured: her head was half giddy with the scenes of gaiety which her brother's approaching nuptials opened to her lively fancy; and her attention was still more engrossed by the frequent visits of Sir Frederick Marsdale, who was now become

come a constant and welcome visitor in Park Place.

Sir Edward had occasion to quit London for a few days: the expiration of that time was fixed for the celebration of Mr. Eldwin's marriage. During the absence of the former, Mr. Walpole called. He no sooner beheld Angelina, than his whole attention was excited by her altered appearance.—He spoke his surprise in a manner which awakened the regard of the rest of the family—who then wondered it had escaped their notice; for the langour of grief her countenance betrayed was considerably increased by indisposition.

Mr. Walpole, who felt interested in the concerns of every human being, was not easy till he had discovered the secret cause of her uneasiness, which he no sooner learned, than, with the zealous warmth of a friend, he represented to Mr. Eldwin the injustice of his conduct towards her.

“ Nothing

“Nothing is more natural,” said Mr. Walpole, “than for a man to desire to be happy: his whole life is commonly spent in endeavouring to discover where that happiness may be found; but when passion directs his course, and he is heedless whom he intercepts or injures in the pursuit, is it to be wondered, that, at the moment he thinks he has her in possession, she changes her form, and, at every stage of his life, he has to re-seek her? The pursuits of his youth, his maturer years look back on with contempt; while the objects that are then become important, serve but for a like reflection when he is sunk into old age. Thus, after a search of some score years, he returns to the same point from which he set out—dissatisfied with all that he has done, and wondering he has not met with happiness. A man who wishes for a reasonable portion, should not entrust it out of his own care, but endeavour to cultivate in himself that strength of mind which he may retire to in all the vicissitudes of his life.

“A well



“A well-known author says, ‘A man that is endowed with such a strength of mind (as is here meant), though he leaves it to his friend or mistress to make him more happy, he does not put it into the power of either to make him miserable.’ But it is not only to *fancy* ourselves in possession of this self-control,” said Mr. Walpole; “it is to call it forth into action. You have hitherto given great proofs of a mind above the common cast. What I mean by that is, a mind superior to doing an act that would degrade you in the world’s eye, and, what I think of infinitely more consequence, an act that would sink you in your own estimation. You will not, nay, you *must* not, think any more of this young lady,” said he, laying his hand on Mr. Eldwin’s arm, to enforce what he said.

Mr. Eldwin urged the violence of his love for Angelina.

“You mistake yourself,” said Mr. Walpole; “pure love is as disinterested as the most refined friendship, and its first

gratification is in contributing to the happiness of the object beloved ; and, remember, this young lady has a stronger claim on your generosity than if she was her own mistress ; for her gratitude has put her entirely into your power ; and what reasonable share of happiness can you expect, when you entrust your's to one who can give you no security for it ? I am no advocate for your romantic love matches, which are built on the extravagant idea of finding in an union of hearts uninterrupted peace ; the purest we are capable of enjoying is mingled with much bitterness. I would wish you, therefore, to seek it upon the most rational grounds, and, depend upon it, there can be no reasonable enjoyment in a married life without a reciprocal affection. A man's wife should be worthy his entire confidence, and not only stand the first in his affections, but also in his esteem."

Mr. Eldwin said, " He knew her conduct to be actuated by whim and caprice ; but that, after a little time, she would be very well reconciled to him ;"

" Ay,"

“Ay,” said Mr. Walpole; “and so you are going to strike upon a rock where thousands have perished, because, perhaps, by some *miracle* you may be saved. It must be a glorious reflection for a generous mind; truly, to behold the woman he has such a *tender* regard for, by *his* means, plunged into misery and guilt!”

Mr. Eldwin started—“*Misery* and *guilt*!” he echoed back: “I shall marry her, Sir.”

“No doubt,” replied Mr. Walpole; “and teach her, by the disregard you pay to her *present* feelings, to forget what may be due to *your’s* as a husband. Why do we hear of so many unhappy marriages, but from children having been sacrificed to wealth and ambition, without having their minds prepared to sustain, with virtuous fortitude, the disappointment of their hopes, and the evils which naturally result from a union of interest. They are no sooner married, than the husband begins to discover his wife’s

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indifference,

ndifference, and though he has been told, long before, that she could never love him, his vanity expects that she will counterfeit an affection, to gratify his pride. If she neglects to do this, he, in his turn, becomes indifferent to her, and behaves to every other woman with more complacency than to his wife:—he flies her society, leaving her exposed to the insulting addresses of every impertinent coxcomb. If she is unhappy enough to meet with one who has art to veil his designs, and, by affecting the virtues she admires, finds that place in her affections her husband never possessed, she listens, unchecked by fear, to the poisonous adulation of his guest, too easily deceived by the flattering attention such cowards are ever ready to bestow; and when a thought of her husband crosses her mind, she reconciles herself with this *reflection—that he only consulted his own happiness when he married her.* Thus she is betrayed into misery and guilt before she is aware of her danger. If she has sensibility—what are her feelings? She shrinks with horror at a review of her conduct, and her remorse

morfe is generally rendered ftill more pungent by the contempt and neglect of her betrayer, who, after he has ufed every art to feduce her innocence, is the firft to reproach her with the lofs of it.—Thus is an amiable young creature loft to fociety, —a husband rendered for ever miferable, —and a villain allowed to triumph in his fuccefs.

“ This you will allow,” faid Mr. Walpole, “ is no picture fhaded by the gloominefs of an old man’s humour. There are few people who love to contemplate the virtues that adorn human nature more than I do; but I cannot altogether be blind to its glaring deformities, and this is a fcene which we are all too often witnefses to, to doubt the truth of its imagery.—But there is a pride among young men,” continued he, “ which leads them into the moft unhappy fituations; they difdain the wifdom of experience, and plunge themfelves into difficulties, from a falfe notion that they are endowed with fuperior means to overcome them: but who is capable of faying, whilft the mift of paffion envelopes



his reason, that he will go so far, and no farther? Depend upon it, my young friend, the most effectual method to secure happiness, is carefully to avoid rushing into the most distant danger of losing her."

Mr. Eldwin's rigid manners assumed the appearance of that firmness which characterises a truly philosophic spirit; but he could not boast of its virtues.—Pride was the leading feature of his character, and from this source his good and bad qualities sprung. It is an old axiom, that to make a man honest, you must tell him he is so; and, by the same rule, Mr. Walpole thought the greatest incitement to Mr. Eldwin's resolution, was to persuade him of the strength of it, on which he dwelt with some success. If the spring of our actions could always be thus ascertained, our very foibles might be sometimes directed to the support of our virtues.

When Mr. Eldwin parted with the old gentleman, his feelings were too complex to be analysed. As he crossed the hall,  
a piece

a piece of paper lay on the floor; in the superscription he recognized the handwriting of Angelina. Curiosity impelled him to open it; it contained a few lines addressed to *Hope*; they were trifling in themselves, but written in a strain which seemed to breathe an air of melancholy:

Oh, Hope! enchanting, whose deluding powers  
Lure us through many a wild fantastic way,  
Strewing the distant scenes with blooming flowers,  
Till, by the witchery, sense is led astray.

Onward thy spells invite us, all elate,  
Charm'd with the opening prospects as they rise,  
And promis'd raptures in succeeding fate,  
Till endless bliss seems plac'd before our eyes.

But, oh! too soon the dear delusion's o'er,  
When disappointment wakes each sense to pain,  
And bids us more acutely feel her power,  
By shewing all that Hope had promis'd vain!

Yet will I court thee, treacherous tho' thou art,  
And to thy votaries add a willing slave;  
In sorrow shalt thou soothe my aching heart,  
In death shalt lead me to the silent grave!  
There shalt thou bid all mortal anguish cease,  
And whisper to my soul eternal peace!

He had scarce glanced his eyes over it, when he met Angelina upon the stairs. The paper was still in his hand—She had missed it, and was come in search of it—She was confused when she saw it in Mr. Eldwin's possession.

He was not in a humour to be pleased.

“Could you find no better method of employing your time,” said he, “than by scribbling poetry? You may think it very fine, perhaps; but, take my word for it, a woman never recommends herself to *us* in this way—I never knew one who attempted to write, that was ever good for any thing else—I am, therefore, sorry you took the trouble to put these lines in my way—I do not approve of your spending your time thus.—Whatever little knowledge you may have picked up, keep it to yourself; women cannot be too silent.”

“Except,” cried Angelina, reddening, “when they are not understood; then it may be necessary for them to prove, that men can sometimes judge them without reason,

reason, and censure them with as little good-nature."

"Come," said he, in a manner between jest and earnest, "confess that you put these lines purposely in my way."

"For what reason, Sir?"

"Young ladies," said he, "love to think themselves unkindly treated—the heroine of all romances must be unhappy—you think the plaintive excites our tenderness and pity."

"That, Sir, you will allow, could not have been my motive in the present instance."

"You have no vanity in your composition, then, I suppose?"

"Not enough, I confess, to desire to be esteemed by a man who can think illiberally; and I am sure the possibility of exciting *your pity and compassion*, Sir, would have entered my head."

“Perhaps you did not think I was capable of feeling any.”

“And if I had thought so,” she answered, “your present conduct is not calculated, Sir, to contradict *that opinion*.”

He looked angry.—“The best of you cannot bear contradiction, I see; you all expect to be worshipped as goddesses, although you take care to let us know, by your conduct, that you are mere women. I am a better friend to you,” he continued, “than men in general; I never pay you any unnecessary deference.”

“Nor any deference at all,” thought Angelina; “though you do not care how much you receive yourself.”

“It is very strange to me,” he resumed, “considering you all of you practice so much art in your conduct towards men, that you ever venture to talk thus before them, when silence so much better becomes you. I have known many ladies, who, by a little judicious conduct  
in



in company, have *appeared* to enter into the most abstracted subjects, and by an attentive look, or well-timed exclamation, had credit for possessing a knowledge of the subject men have been discussing, when, in reality, they could not have answered one question relating to it."

"You have made very nice observations," said Angelina, "much in our favour, Sir; and, in the name of the whole sex, I thank you."

"Whatever you may think of them," said he, "they are nevertheless just, and, in my opinion, by no means to be condemned."

"By this rule, Mr. Eldwin, you would not have censured me for writing, could I have proved that the lines had been artfully contrived with no other view than your perusal of them."

"No, certainly, I should not."

“And why not?” she asked.

“Because,” he answered, “I should have considered that you had paid me a compliment by it—It would have been but an innocent amusement.”

“Oh, now I understand you,” said she; “for the future I will endeavour to act by your rule, and, instead of regulating my conduct according to *my* ideas of right, accommodate it to your’s, and never write again, but to feed *other people’s* vanity.”

“What are you talking of?” he cried. “Did *I* ever once descend to the meanness of panegyrising the unworthy? Can any one say that I ever allowed merit to those who were not entitled to it?”

“Oh, no,” said Angelina, with emphasis; “I am sure, Sir, no one ever said that you allowed merit to *any one*.”

“Certainly not; there is no person I hold in so despicable a light,” said he, as a flatterer; it is the most contemptible character

character I know.—I would rather be ——” “*an idol yourself,*” thought Angelina, “and have thousands come and worship you, than pay the smallest tribute at another’s shrine.”——“I do not know what I would not rather be,” he continued, “than a flatterer.”

“Yet you recommend me to the practice of deceit, Sir.”

“*I wish you to dissemble!*” said he; “you mistake me quite.”

“Yet you would not consider it a fault if I was to think one way, and act another.”

“You were never much more mistaken,” said he; “I should think it a very great fault.”

“Nay, but, Mr. Eldwin, a few moments ago you was angry that I had not wrote with a design to deceive you.”

“Pshaw!”

"Pshaw!" he returned, peevishly; "I only meant, that in such instances I think it very excusable; that is, I mean to say, it is laudable for every one to cultivate the good opinion of others."

"Not until they have secured their own," said Angelina; "and unless you can persuade me that there is no virtue in sincerity, I am sure you will allow me to practise it."

"We will talk of that hereafter," said he; "but recollect, that if you wish to cultivate men's esteem, never set up for a writer. The moment women turn scribblers they become conceited, idle, regardless of our opinion, and careless of their own; neither fit for domestic life, or any other."

"Except," cried she, smiling, "they can write to feed the humours and caprices of other people; then it is a very *innocent amusement*."

"A wife

“A wife of mine shall never write at all!” said he—and he left her to reflect upon these words, muttering, as he went away, that he had been making a fool of himself, by entering into a dispute with her.—Mr. Eldwin was in one of his contradictory moods; and in these humours he could have quarrelled with *all nature*.

She had seldom spoken to him with so much freedom before. As soon as she was left alone, her spirits sunk again to their usual sadness—she did not dare to reflect; and, instead of going to her chamber as she intended, she returned to the drawing-room. On entering it, to her surprise and confusion, she found Montague there: he was talking earnestly to Ethelind.

Angelina had not seen him since her marriage with Mr. Eldwin had been proposed. He took her hand with an air of tenderness; she drew it away from him in silence, bent her eyes upon the ground, and quitted the room.

When



When she reached the library, she sat down, and wept bitterly. She dreaded betraying before Montague what she suffered in his presence, and determined not to venture in to dinner, lest he should be there. She wished him to think that she was happy, and that she would not indulge in reflecting on what was now unavoidable. She took down a book to read; but her mind was too abstracted from the subject, and she laid it on the table, lost in thought. She had sat until it was almost dark, unconscious that any one was witness to her silent anguish; when, turning her head, she saw the door of the room open, and Montague standing near it, looking mournfully at her.

At sight of him the colour mounted to her face: she snatched up her book.

He looked at her as if he would have said, "Forgive the intrusion!"—but before he could speak she was gone.

She hurried from him, impelled by fear, lest her feelings should betray her. She  
was

was more overpowered with grief than ever; and it was not until she heard that he had quitted the house that she ventured out of her chamber.

When they met at supper, Ethelind told her, “ that Mr. Montague only called to bid them farewell; for on the following evening he was to leave London.

Mrs. Bonnam was become the bosom friend of Lady Eldwin, and a constant visitor in Park Place. Before her Ladyship she behaved to Angelina with an indifference bordering upon rudeness; but when not any of the rest of the family were present, she assumed quite a different manner, and was all attention and respect, striving, by these means, to gain her confidence. Angelina's eyes were opened by the duplicity of her conduct, and she was too much upon her guard to utter any thing before her which might be interpreted to her disadvantage.

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CHAP. V.

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ON the following morning Sir Frederick Marfdale called, by appointment, with his sisters, to take Angelina and Ethelind to a review. They were absent some hours. Ethelind remained with them during the day, but Angelina, whose spirits were more than usually depressed, felt unequal to appear in company; and, notwithstanding many intreaties, she at length got excused, and returned to Park Place alone. Upon entering the house, she was proceeding to the drawing-room, when Patty, who had been waiting her return, stopped her.—She said.—“It was her mistresses commands that no one should be admitted there.” She then told Angelina, “that there had been a sad affair, since the morning; with Lady Eldwin and her young master. Mrs. Bonham,”  
continued

continued Patty, "was with them; and soon after she came to the house her Ladyship went into fits. Mr. Montague was immediately sent for, and he is now with them in the drawing-room. I am sure, Miss," added Patty, "it is something concerning you, for I heard My Lady mention your name a great many times, and so did Mr. Montague."

Angelina, not chusing to ask her any questions, went up to her chamber. As she passed the library, the door being open, she saw Mr. Eldwin, pale, confused, and walking up and down the room in much agitation. There was such an air of distractedness in his whole appearance, that it awakened in her mind a degree of tenderness, and she anxiously asked—"Is he well?" He looked at her some minutes, without seeming to know that she had spoken—when, taking both her hands in his, he exclaimed, in a tone of passionate feeling, "We must part, Angelina—your wishes are accomplished—we shall meet no more!"—She looked at him as if she would have said,  
 "Am

“Am I awake, or in a dream?” And pointing to the door, “Go;” he cried, in a hurried voice, “leave me—you will in a short time know the dreadful barrier that divides us—you will hear from Montague.”

Angelina retired perplexed with conjecture. To be freed from her engagement with Mr. Eldwin was a thing so unexpected, that she wept with contending emotions. She had sat upwards of two hours in a state of the most uncomfortable suspense, when she received a small packet of papers, with a note from Mr. Montague. A fearful curiosity impelled her to burst the seal, and she read as follows :

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“Horror creeps through every vein as I write—but the dreadful truth must be revealed—I would tell you, Angelina, not to weep—I would teach you to bear it with fortitude—I would say to you, that it is the lot of humanity to suffer ;—but I might as reasonably command the great ocean of waters to recede from



from its resting place, as bid the mind not thrill with horror at such complicated villany. Let the world cease from changing around us—let pain and sickness, and all the miseries that wait upon mortality, be changed into health and joy;—let one unclouded sunshine of prosperity blaze full upon us—and still there will be found no happiness among men—for who shall rest in safety upon his fellow creature?

“ Honour is but a name!—all the social virtues are extinct!—every moral law is burst asunder!—and man smiles but to betray! Forgive these apostrophy’s; my brain maddens as I write—take the packet I enclose—there read the infamous secret of your birth—and then ask yourself what cause I have for grief and indignation!

“ Oh! my Angelina! why did *we* ever meet?—why did not nature whisper to my heart, that it was guilt to love you?—why did she not boldly exclaim, in the language of truth—Angelina is the SISTER of the wretched Montague?”

It

It was some moments before she broke the seal of the inclosed papers; when, to her increased astonishment, she found it contained the manuscript she had brought with her from Vernly; and which Sir Edward had taken from her in their journey to East-Cliff. In the superscription she recognized these words, in the hand writing of Mrs. Beverly:

*“To warn the giddy, and instruct the gay!”*

The first paper was written within a few days of her death, and addressed to Sir Edward Eldwin, as follows:

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“The scene of life is now closing fast upon me, and the symptoms that have long indicated an early death, threaten, in a few short weeks, to free me from a wretched existence! In this moment, when the grave is opening to receive me, for the last time I address you; not with reproaches, for my heart has done with resentment.—To little purpose should I have implored for mercy, if I had not learned  
to

to practise it. If my days have passed away in the bitterness of sorrow, it was but the consequence of guilt, and I deserved to suffer!

“ I *now* write, to tell you, that the promise you wrung from me when we parted, I have faithfully kept. Angelina is yet ignorant that I am her wretched mother; and, to remind you of the solemn oath by which you bound yourself to acknowledge her as your child, at my death—Pause here for one *moment*, for, when this comes to your hand, that *hour* will be past—all will then be over!—

“ The inclosed papers will discover to her the secret of her birth. I have laid my heart open, with *all* its guilt, to her inspection.—Oh! how bitter, at this moment, is the reflection—that the first sensation she feels for me, will swell her bosom with indignation, and paint her cheek with shame!—But, why do I tremble!—Alas! if I fear to lay it open to my child, how much more reason have I to dread the all-seeing eye of Him who beholds

holds its innermost recesses?—I commit her to your care, innocent and happy; and I have endeavoured to instil into her mind such principles of virtue, as will secure to her the first; and have taught her that the last can only be obtained by the preservation of the former.

“ I will not ask you to be a father to her—nature will plead for her in a language more forcible than I can—she will appeal to the heart. Look at her youth, her innocence—see her rich in simplicity and truth—a stranger to the world, and beautiful to look on.—From what a shelter art thou going forth, my child!—How does my soul shrink with terror, when I reflect on thee—Behold her young heart, hitherto a stranger to grief—now sinking under the weight of its sorrows—for her first, and only friend—her mother—is carried to the grave—Who will cherish her with affection? Knowest thou whither she can turn her steps—Is there one person upon earth that will open a door to receive her—Alas! she knows not that she has a claim upon any one;—and this

is the daughter of the once happy Mrs. Montague ;—this is the child of Sir Edward Eldwin. Does reflection rush upon thy brain?—hast thou a heart?—hast thou the smallest particle of humanity in it?—If thou hast, take her to it, and bid her hide her sorrows on the bosom of a——Father!”

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Upon the cover of the next paper, was written these words :

“ I, Elwina Montague, known only by the feigned name of Beverley, commit this manuscript to Sir Edward Eldwin; to be by him delivered to my unfortunate child, Angelina Eldwin, passing under the assumed name of Aubrey.

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“ Many a bitter conflict has the heart sustained, that now addresses you; and, perhaps, it may be thought strange, that I should desire to make known the story of my life, when a relation of it must fill your mind with very different sensations than those which you have been



accustomed to feel for me. I can only say, that, much as your duty and affection has contributed to my happiness, and jealous as human nature is of its good name, I would rather you should look upon me with horror and indignation, so that you escaped the sorrows of guilt, than, by withholding the relation from you, you should be one moment in danger of incurring them. But not all the precepts that ever were written, not the example I can leave you, will effect your safety, unless you carefully keep a watch over your own heart:—for once, Angelina, *I* was innocent as you are, till Passion usurped the place of reason, trampled on each virtuous principle of the heart, rooted up the flowers of peace and innocence, and then—triumphed in the devastation it had made. How often have I pressed you to my aching bosom, and prayed that that spirit of truth and innocence, which so strongly characterized your youth, might lead you through life in safety, a stranger to the miseries I have experienced:—at those moments, my heart has been rent by the most agonizing

nizing reflections ;—but nature was denied her rights, and I dared not then tell you in secret what will now be published to the world—I am your mother !—you are the daughter of Sir Edward Eldwin !—Start not, Angelina !—I beseech you, my child, to look upon me with compassion ! What have not been my sufferings for these seventeen years past ?—Sorrow and I have never been separated ! But let me write to be understood—I will go back to the hour of my birth ; for the moment that gave me being was pregnant with misery—it robbed my father of an amiable wife, and me, his only child, of a mother ! Five years had scarce rolled over my head, before I was left an orphan, entirely dependant on an uncle, my father's elder brother. He lived so much secluded from the world, and had had so little intercourse with our family, that, at that time, I had never seen him. Report spoke him a man of a morose temper, and great obduracy of heart ; but when the world sits in judgment upon men's characters, who is honourably acquitted ?

“A friend made application to him in my behalf, and this was his answer:

“If my house would take *in* as many as my heart, all the children of misfortune would dwell there. Tell her it shall be *her* home as long as it is *mine*. I mention this, to give you an idea of his character. It was formed in one of Nature's rudest moulds; but made up of her choicest materials. I cannot speak enough of his infinite worth; to him I was indebted for all the education I received, which was much beyond what is generally bestowed on our sex. When I was twelve years old, a gentleman was introduced into our family by the name of Montague, a brother to the present Lord Algernon. During the vacations (for he was then a student at the University of Glasgow), he made our house his home. He was a young man of the most simple and uncorrupted manners, of great understanding and accomplishments, and of a studious turn of mind, but free from the *pride* of learning. He sought rather to put others in good humour with their own abilities,

abilities, than to humble them by displaying his own. His temper suited well with the temper and gravity of my uncle, and there subsisted a friendship between them which is rarely found to exist where there is such a disparity of years. Mr. Montague took much pleasure in instructing me, and I was so accustomed to look upon him with that respect which great abilities in young minds generally inspire, that an approving smile from him was always an incitement to make me attend more closely to my studies; so that when I had reached my seventeenth year, I was looked upon as a phenomenon; such pains had been taken to cultivate my mind. Nature had been very liberal in all her gifts; for at that time I was said to possess much wit, and a more than common share of beauty. You will smile on reading this, perhaps, and call it vanity: but, reflect on me now; for when this comes to your hand the tomb will have inclosed me!—and say, my Angelina, what did *all* avail? Did it make me happier, wiser, more respected, more beloved, than those who never possessed those advantages? No.

—And how much better, at this moment, would it be for me, if I could now boast of the purity of my heart, instead of the beauty of my person, or the brilliancy of my wit!

“Alas! that I should ever have been so unfortunate as to captivate the noble heart of Mr. Montague! Strange reverse of Fate, that this very circumstance, on which I then built all my hopes of happiness, in being esteemed worthy his affection, should have since plunged me into so much misery, as to make me regret that I ever saw him! He viewed me with eyes blinded by affection. My very faults were hid from his sight. He magnified the trifling qualities I possessed, till he persuaded himself that they were the brightest virtues that could dignify human nature. And what return did I make for this confidence? When he had given up his family, and set defiance to the world’s opinion, by boldly, in the very face of it, making me his wife:—when a nearer tie bound me still closer to him, rich in the possession of his love, I left him; quitted my benefactor, friend, husband,  
the



the father of my child, and fled with Sir Edward Eldwin! What followed?—vengeance, direful vengeance! For when Nature awoke in my breast, shame and grief awoke with her. Oh! could the wounded spirit of my husband look down upon me in this hour, he would acknowledge, that, however the injured are objects of compassion, the guilty only are the truly miserable!

“What excuse have I to offer in extenuation of my guilt? Married to a man my heart approved, one who possessed every charm to please, denied nothing that could gratify the pride of woman, with a prospect before me that promised lasting happiness—was it any excuse that he brought his bosom friend into his family, and put confidence in his wife’s honour? No; that implicit faith he relied on should have been his security. Is it any palliation to say, that Sir Edward Eldwin had wit, or that he was accustomed to the society of women, and knew how to engage their attention? No;—for would he have dared to breathe his licentious love in my presence, had he not seen that

I would listen to him? Or, admitting that he had only tried in what manner I should have received it, had my heart been as strong in principle as it was secure in its own conceit, to no purpose would he have flattered me. But I was too confident in my own virtues. When I saw others unfortunate, I turned from them without pity, and wondered how they fell. It would be well for me now, if I could offer up such excuses as exonerate thousands of them.

“Had any one told me, a twelvemonth before, of the disgrace I was about to incur, I should have heard them with horror, fury, and indignation—so secure was I, at that time, that my heart was not to be seduced by any attempts whatever. If Vice appeared before us, in her natural deformity, to see her, would be to detest her; but it is not in this form that we have to guard against her approach: she assumes so many bewitching shapes, puts on such a look of virtue, holds up such a fascinating view of human happiness, that the heart unguardedly enters into a co-  
venant

covenant with her, and the passions come progressively under her dominion :

“ For, seen too oft familiar with her face,

“ We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

“ When I quitted Glencairn, the place where I had lived with Mr. Montague for upwards of seven years, Sir Edward Eldwin received me at a small village in Cumberland, where I remained but a short time before I was removed to London: there we lived in a retired situation for near six months. I then began to find how little dependence I had on his vows of lasting fidelity; and what right had I to expect any other conduct?—for, in his heart, must he not have held mine in the utmost abhorrence? I was so distracted with the reverse of my situation, and so wounded with my own reflections, (for, wherever I went, the image of my injured husband, and the poignant sense of the injuries I had done him, were present in my mind’s eye), that I would have fled from Sir Edward’s protection, had not my *situation* prevented me; but I was compelled to remain some time longer with him. Soon after the birth of you, my

Angelina, I received a piece of intelligence, that suspended a while all my sorrows: I learned that Sir Edward Eldwin had been privately married, for upwards of five years, to a young woman, by whom he had a son and daughter. This stroke pressed upon my heart so heavily, that, for some months, I was insensible to the evils that surrounded me. During that period, you were taken from me, and placed with a woman, who is now living in Gloucestershire.

“When I recovered, it was to new horrors! Oh! what were my feelings in that hour, when I heard that Mr. Montague’s sorrows had borne him to the grave! The time seems still present with me!—Then, Montague, hadst thou vengeance, ample vengeance, of thy injuries! For, in that hour, whose reflections were so bitter as mine?—the murderer of my husband!—he who had sheltered me from the storm of adversity, when I had no place wherein to hide my sorrows!—for I should have told you, that it was on the death of my uncle Beverly, that  
Mr.

Mr. Montague married me. From the hour in which I heard that fatal intelligence, to the present moment, I have never seen Sir Edward Eldwin. My anxiety for you made me submit to being indebted to him for pecuniary assistance. You must think of him, Angelina, as your father—as such he has a right to all the duty and obedience you can pay to him—he has been ever solicitous about you, and has promised to acknowledge you, at my death, as his child:—add not, then, to his sufferings, by a word, or even a look, that may remind him of me; nay, do not even think of me in his presence; for when he, in cool and unimpassioned intervals, reverts to the past, horror and remorse must follow his reflections!

“ There is another person I would speak of; but I know not what to say!—I dare not call him *my son*; for I have violated the sacred name of *mother*!—Has he not been taught to shrink at the sound? Can he ever forget the injuries done to his father? I have sometimes



thought, that, could I be permitted to see him, to lay my guilt before him, it would relieve my mind, in part, from the burden that oppresses it; but, perhaps, it was better that I should not. Could I have implored his forgiveness?—No; even his compassion he must have refused me. He would have asked me, perhaps, if I lamented thus when I parted with his father, and left him, to go away with a stranger? Bitter thought, to be rejected by my child!—But who burst the sacred tie that united us? *I* forgot the duty of a mother; and shall I wonder that he now forgets he is my son? If it should be your fate ever to see my Frederick, tell him, Angelina, what I have suffered; that it is not now, when I am sinking to the grave, that I feel compunction for what is past; for what sorrows have I not gone through in this vale of tears!

“ You are now going into a world that *I* entered innocent as you are: I was beloved, honoured, respected. Look at me now! When I should have been surrounded with friends, happy in their affection,

fection, and rich in my own esteem—I am sinking, unknown, unpitied, into the arms of death, without one reflection to soften its terrors! If, when I am no more, I am remembered with a sigh, it must rise only from the bosom of my Angelina!

“Can I leave you, my love, a more striking instance of the certain misery that is attendant on guilt, than this review my past life affords you? Were all our prospects confined within this narrow state of existence, even then the path of rectitude would be found the only safe, the only pleasant one. Every species of vice carries a latent poison along with it; but when higher views open upon us, and we look forward to a future world, then, who would not forego such momentary delusions for a reward of permanent felicity?

“May you, my child, in such an hour, be able to rejoice that you were better fitted to partake of it than your unhappy mother!

“Take

“Take this manuscript as the last relic which I can leave you; for, before it reaches the inspection of a mortal eye, the veil of eternity will have been drawn aside, and the trembling wretch, that now writes, summoned to the presence of an offended God! In that hour, may I be permitted to say, I have made my peace with HIM!—that seventeen years of agonizing suffering have wiped out the stains of guilt, and the deep contrition of my heart *his* MERCY has accepted!”

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CHAP. VI.

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ANGELINA could not weep, her grief was too big for utterance, and, before she had power to fold up the manuscript, she heaved a convulsive sigh, and sunk senseless on the floor. She had borne up against her own sorrows and disappointments with a fortitude not commonly found in youth; but all her strength was inadequate to support her in the shock she sustained in contemplating the wretched fate of her mother! Her health had been some time declining, and the violent manner in which she was now attacked, threatened the most fatal consequences; for, the day following that on which she was taken ill, she became wholly insensible, and in this state of stupor she remained for upwards of fifteen days.

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It is here necessary that the reader should be acquainted with the manner by which these papers came into her hands.

Lady Eldwin, perplexed by Sir Edward's conduct in regard to Angelina, and feeling herself infinitely disappointed by his intention of uniting her to his son, not accustomed to make her wishes subservient to reason, she was so far forgetful of her dignity, as to descend to make complaint of her husband's conduct to Mrs. Bonnam, whose curiosity having been so often excited by the strange stories she had repeatedly listened to concerning Miss Aubrey, with all the rhetoric she was mistress of, she persuaded Lady Eldwin to search his private papers, in order to see whether any of them would discover to whom the girl belonged. The MS. which Sir Edward had taken from Angelina, in their journey to East-Cliff, had never escaped her Ladyship's memory; and, urged by what she called offended pride, she took advantage of his absence to put her unwarrantable design in execution:



execution. It was then, upon opening his desk, that she found, to her confusion, the above disclosed writings.

Justly transported with rage and indignation, and struck with horror at the idea of the near relationship which subsisted between her son and Angelina, thoughtless of the consequences which might arise to Sir Edward by exposing his infamous conduct, with precipitate haste she dispatched a servant for Mr. Montague, who had no sooner come to the house than she delivered up the papers to him; and what had been Sir Edward's study, for many years, artfully to conceal from every human eye, was now, in a moment, when least thought of, brought to light—the mask was torn aside, and all the villain appeared lurking under it!

Had Mr. Eldwin been at home, it is probable that he would have acted with more discretion; but he came in too late; Montague was in possession of the secret, and his feelings, on the occasion, no pen could do justice to. The infamous conduct

duct of Sir Edward, even his children could not palliate. Mr. Eldwin sent immediately for his father—he came—Montague was present. The latter vented not his indignation in words ; but he looked at him with a countenance so full of such expression, as spoke volumes of reproaches! Rage and disappointment filled the breast of Sir Edward ; he uttered the most dreadful execrations: so true it is, that bad men never forgive those they have injured.—But their passions are but vapours, which dissolve before the resplendent ray of Truth ; and the stern look of virtuous indignation, which Montague assumed, soon awed him into silence. Vice was divested of every covering—and Sir Edward knew not where to hide his guilt. He offered Montague satisfaction—and bade him chuse his weapons.

“ *Satisfaction !*” he echoed back, indignantly :—“ your death cannot atone for the injuries done to my father ; neither can it recal the honour of his wife !—and when I raise my arm against the life of a fellow-creature—

creature—it shall never be to send a *villain* unprepared into eternity !

“ He who plunders on the highway, even if he adds murder to robbery, is a less pernicious monster in society, than the man who clothes his villainy in smiles. The one gives you an opportunity of defending yourself—he meets you as *he is* ; but against the latter, who shall be guarded—when he creeps into your bosom, artfully steals into your confidence, to plunge the dagger deeper in your breast ? Was there nothing that could withhold thee,” said Montague, “ from stabbing the peace of my father, when he opened his doors to receive you, whilst he held you in confidence to his noble and unsuspecting breast ? Couldst thou make no better return to his hospitality, than by destroying all his happiness ? ”

“ Montague,” said Sir Edward, in much agitation, “ I cannot bear this ! The reflection of what is past, is punishment sufficient !—do not harrow up my feelings by this repetition of it ! ”

“ Thy

“Thy feelings!” cried he, with indignation, “It is well for men to talk thus, who have hearts strong enough to violate the best and dearest ties of humanity! When you was first admitted under my father’s roof, you saw that all his happiness rested in the bosom of his family. My mother was then pure and innocent! She knew no wish beyond making herself worthy of a husband’s love; she was the companion of his happiest hours, for there then subsisted between them that mutual confidence, which is the strongest cementer of hearts. Is it not natural to suppose, that my father looked forward to many years of enjoyment that they should pass together?—When you was introduced into the family, you saw him happy in the affection of his wife. Coward!” said Montague, “you rested not till you had seduced her!”

Sir Edward’s eyes flashed fire.

“Hold,” he exclaimed, “I will repeat it—That man is the greatest of all cowards, who takes advantage of the weakness

weakness of woman ! Can you say that she made the first advances ?—and if she had, what then ?—Does that exonerate you ?—No ;—men are all ready to boast of their superiority over the sex :—let them prove it in better instances—in rescuing them from dishonour !—Instead of which, you crept insidiously into her confidence ; it cost you much trouble to lead her from the path of virtue ; and, after the pains you took to accomplish your purpose, what was the result of it ?—the loss of your own esteem !—death to your friend !—and, to my poor deluded mother, shame and sorrow ! Yet, for this, you descended to put on every mean garb which artifice could invent. Strange, that man, who is ennobled with reason, should allow one mean, unlawful, passion to triumph over every virtue !”

“ Can you make no allowance ?” said Sir Edward.

“ None !” cried Montague. “ What is it which distinguishes the principled from the unprincipled ?—The one governs



*verns his passions*; the other, allows them to *govern him*. You had a wife!—you had children!—could not they have pleaded in behalf of my mother?—could not you have made the case your own, and have asked your heart, what it would feel on such an occasion, in being deprived of either by the arts of a villain?—Let every man, who is about to act as you have done, first put this question to himself, and let him abide by the answer!—Then, perhaps, we shall hear of fewer miserable husbands—of fewer mothers sunk into infamy. Such evils will teach men to shut themselves up from all friendly intercourse with each other; and, when every avenue to the heart is guarded by suspicion—when the best and dearest ties of humanity are weakened by fear and distrust, what a state of wretchedness shall we live in!—Yet, when no law, moral or divine, can bind man to the interest of his fellow creature, such must be the fatal consequences. You saw my father, in the midst of his grief, still resting upon your honour with implicit faith! You was with him, in his last moments,

ments, when he committed me to your care:—you heard the sacred charge he gave me—‘ That, if ever I should discover my mother, to be a *Son* to her, and carefully to hide her guilt from the world!’ Yet, all this time, you could look upon him, and determine—that I should *never see her!* Dear, deluded mother, what have not been thy sufferings!—It is plain thou hadst not a mind formed to be thus sacrificed! If thou quittedst the path of virtue, it was but for a moment—soon again didst thou retrace thy steps—But thou art now out of the reach of the unmerciful—and where sorrow will not follow thee!”

Montague paused;—he thought of Angelina—he remembered she was the child of his mother, and he demanded of Sir Edward to see her. This request was denied him, and he was obliged to content himself with a promise that he should hear from her. He then mentioned Sir Edward’s horrible intention of making her the wife of Mr. Eldwin. This accusation affected the former more deeply

deeply than all else which Montague had said. His countenance was flushed with guilt—he was confounded—every feeling was on the rack—he answered not—till (no longer restrained by Montague's presence,) he gave free vent to his passions. He loaded Lady Eldwin with the most dreadful execrations—he bade her leave his house—and vowed never to see her more.

Here Mr. Eldwin interposed. He reminded his father, that, by such a conduct, he would expose himself to the world. This hint had much weight with him, and she was indebted to his pride, more than any latent tenderness, for remaining under his roof.

Angelina was confined to her chamber near two months; in which time she received several letters from Montague. As he could not come to the house, it was not likely that they should meet again for some time, which, for many reasons, he thought most prudent. He intreated her to remember, on all occasions,

that there was one ever ready to serve her. He gave Ethelind a charge to be a sister to her, and, by her means, conveyed to Angelina, all his mother's jewels. He begged her, as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, to write him in *what manner*, and *where*, she had lived before she went to East-Cliff. He intreated, that if the picture of his father was in her possession to send it him, as he recollected, that it was the only valuable his mother had taken with her when she quitted Glencainn, consequently, it was likely she had never parted with it.

Angelina had it in her power to restore it to him. It came into her hands at the death of Mrs. Montague. Upon looking at it, she easily discovered the resemblance it bore to his son. She then gave him a short account of what had passed since she could remember:—That, from Mrs. Montague, she had heard that she had been nursed in Gloucestershire; and that she was two years old before she returned to her mo-

ther, at Vernly, who there went by the name of Beverly.

She recollected often, when a child, having seen her weep bitterly over her; but, as she grew up, she was taught only to look upon her as her instructress, having always been impressed with the idea that Sir Edward Eldwin was her uncle, and the only person to whom she was indebted for all she received;—that they lived in an easy manner, but so much secluded, as seldom to see any other persons than the rustics of the village, and their own domestics, which consisted of an old man and his wife. Thus, in the greatest retirement, they passed their time.

Angelina, not ever having been from Mrs. Montague, had received no other tuition than what was in her power to give her. The latter was much respected in the neighbourhood, though little known, for she never could be persuaded to mingle in their cheerful societies. There was an interesting melancholy in  
her



her manner; for, though she never complained, it was easy to discover that her mind was a prey to grief. To the poor she sacrificed much, for she had often been known to deny herself almost the common necessities of life to bestow it upon them. She never talked of any thing relative to herself. She had lingered a great while in a declining way, and was very sensible of the approach of death; during which time, all her concern seemed to centre in Angelina, for whom she had ever manifested a maternal love. The papers, which disclosed the secret of Angelina's birth, were finished but a few days previous to her death. They were, no doubt, intended to be forwarded to Sir Edward before that awful event; but this took place so suddenly, that she had not power to express even her wishes concerning them.

Sir Edward was applied to by the old servant respecting his late mistress's interment, and received orders from him to see every thing performed that was necessary in this last sad office; at the

same time appointing a day in which he was to fetch Miss Aubrey. The house he ordered to be let, and promised to allow the old servants an annuity.

At the appointed time Sir Edward arrived at Vernly, where he found all his orders punctually obeyed. There Angelina saw him for the first time since she could remember. He seemed anxious to leave the place, and hurried her away, who, with a sorrowful and trembling heart, was presented to Lady Eldwin. What passed afterwards Montague was as well acquainted with as the reader.

Sir Edward had not seen Angelina since her recovery; and so little did he wish for an interview, that he had lodgings taken for her at Richmond, *for change of air*, to which place, with Miss Dorothy, she was removed.

Montague had had a very severe fit of illness;—he was ordered to Nice, whither Lord Algernon accompanied him.

Angelina's

Angelina's spirits became every day more and more depressed, and her declining health gave evident symptoms of a consumption.

Miss Dorothy, not very fond of sacrificing her time to a sick room, instead of endeavouring to dissipate the gloom which daily clouded Angelina's spirits, frequently left her to her own sad reflections, and sought relief for herself by mixing among those who could better entertain her.

Ethelind frequently visited her; but Lady Eldwin's *nerves* were too weak for such a condescension.

Sir Frederick Marsdale, who had been received into the family as the lover of Miss Eldwin, often accompanied her to Richmond.

Being there one day, Ethelind said, "Would you think, Angelina, that this rattle-brained Sir Frederick, could ever be serious? Yet, if you will believe me,

he has been entertaining me this whole morning with a very wise discourse upon the follies of the present age; begging, very seriously, that I will not devote so much of my time to them. If he has the assurance to reprove me now, what am I to expect from him hereafter?"

"That he will be more guarded," said Sir Frederick, bowing to her, with a smile. "At present you are your own mistress; therefore not obliged to take my advice. When I am your husband, you will, perhaps, think yourself in my power; therefore, I shall be more tenacious of giving it to you."

"This is not a part of the lover's creed," cried Ethelind;—"their's is to behold all perfection before marriage, and to find out every blemish after."

"That is an article," said Sir Frederick, "that I shall never subscribe to. If each would be sincere, there would be much more happiness. I would have every man act the lover as long as he  
is

is the husband. There is something so ungenerous, and degrading, in the idea of a man's neglecting a woman, because he has it in his power to do so."

"Fine talking," said Ethelind—"A propos,—old Popham is in town with us, Angelina. Captain Northland has run away with Jenny to Scotland. The old man takes it as I expected he would: at first he was very much hurt, but they have converted his sorrow into anger, by writing the most ignorant, impudent letters, that were ever scrawled on paper. The fellow had the assurance to demand her fortune immediately, from some misrepresentation of her's—the servants having always taught her to believe, that it was in her own possession. This, however, is not the case, and he is as much deceived as every FORTUNE-HUNTER merits to be; for he now finds, that, instead of twenty thousand pounds, the old man will only settle a trifle upon her for life, which is to go to her children, if she has any. Old Popham is terribly exasperated," continued Ethelind. "I



told him, he should have kept a sharper look-out. He says, 'He always thought the puppy (for he calls him so) was not good for much, he was so idly inclined; though he never suspected that he would have turned out such an accomplished hypocrite.' He is very angry at the idea of being outwitted by two such simpletons!"

"I don't see why he should," said Sir Frederick; "for when the mind is honest and upright in itself, it very seldom suspects villany in others; and I think it rather a proof of the integrity of Mr. Popham's heart, than an impeachment of his sense; and I would at any time rather have my understanding called in question, than my honesty. As to the Captain, he is beneath the resentment of the old gentleman: he may appear to triumph now, but, if he is capable of any reflection, time will prove to him, that he must, at last, be entangled in the intricate path he has taken; for there never was an instance yet, I believe, where

where happiness was found to be lasting, when it was dishonourably fought."

"No, never!" sighed Angelina, heavily:—she was thinking of the fate of her mother. Their cheerfulness afforded her but a temporary relief from sorrow, for, as soon as they left her, her mind relapsed into its former melancholy.

The villany of Sir Edward was not among the least of her regrets. She found it difficult to unite the betrayer of her mother's honour to the person of one whom she had long been taught to love and reverence; yet, amidst all she suffered, it was a subject of joy, to reflect that she had been rescued from falling a sacrifice to Sir Edward's intention of making her the wife of his son. She wished to forget he was the father of them both.

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CHAP. VII.

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**T**HE philosophic Mr. Eldwin—(who had set out in life with the very wise determination of blunting the keenest arrows of Misfortune, who was to look up with smiling ease, even in the danger of the storm, thanking nature that he was out of the reach of its influence)—now found that the armour of pride he wore, and the shield of contempt he carried, was not proof against her attacks ; for the moment her shafts were levelled against him, where he thought himself most, he was least invulnerable.

He quitted London—he was sure in the country he should recover his tranquillity—he would resume his former habits—shut himself up from from all intercourse with the world and its allurements and he went, determined  
never

never to think of Angelina more. Yet he never entered his study, his garden, or sat himself down for one moment, that his fancy did not present her; but no eye was there to behold him, and he gave himself up so intirely to the reflection of what had passed, that his mind made no resistance against the disappointment it had suffered, and he was sinking fast into a state of actual despondency. In vain his family solicited his return to town. Sir Edward had procured him a representation in the Borough of ——. This he now insisted upon declining—he hated such pursuits—he was too much engaged in *study* to attend to them.

Mr. Eldwin might have remained in this state till he had dwindled into insignificance, if he had not been roused by the friendship of Mr. Walpole, who took the pains of going some miles out of London to visit him in his retreat.

Mr. Eldwin was by no means disappointed by this visit from Mr. Walpole.

“ Well,” cried he, shaking hands with him—“ and so, my young friend, you have at last found out, that happiness is only to be met with in solitude !”

“ I have, Sir—and philosophers having thought so before me, must be my apology.”

“ Umph !”—said Mr. Walpole, eying him attentively—“ and you seem to have found, in this retreat, perfect tranquillity !”

“ Perfect tranquillity—” repeated Mr. Eldwin ; but there was an air of absence in his whole appearance, that evinced it was not *quite so perfect* as to give ease to his mind. “ It appears,” said the old gentleman, “ that you know how to make very nice distinctions between solitude and retirement. Most men in your situation would have avoided being alone :—you, however, have certainly shewn your wisdom by flying from your family, as, in such a wild, romantic spot as this, you



you can never be reminded of past happiness."

"It is impossible to be alone, whilst I am surrounded by such excellent companions;" and he pointed to the shelves of books that were placed round the room.

"Very true," said Mr. Walpole; "and it is very unnatural to suppose that the mind should ever become overcharged with study, and languish for a little relaxation! It is likewise very improbable," he continued, "that a young man, at your time of life, should look forward to happiness; or that you should find a greater inclination to give way to painful regrets, than to cultivate the society of these excellent companions, by whom you are so happily surrounded!" imitating his tone and manner, and pointing to the books.

Mr. Eldwin reddened, but was silent, as the former continued—"There is but one thing, in all this, which surprises me; and that is, if you only preferred solitude  
for

for study, why not be as much secluded in London with your own family?"

"Pshaw!" said Mr. Eldwin, with passionate warmth, surprised from his reserve by this bantering—"who would linger about the tomb of his happiness! I cannot wear the smiles of content, whilst every feeling is in torture!"

Mr. Walpole looked him full in the face—"You talk of tombs and tortures!" said he—"what should you know about either?—you who are out of the reach of calamity—you who have too great a command over yourself to be *elevated by pleasure, enervated by enjoyment, or depressed by misfortune.*"

"I acknowledge," said Mr. Eldwin, "it is a fair retort—'He jest at scars who never felt a wound!'—I will be ingenuous with you; for I have entangled myself in a wild labyrinth, and feeling that I have done so, is half the cause of my retreat. I set out in life guided by Conceit, for I was too soon taught to know my own importance."

importance. My father wished me to appear in the world one of its brightest ornaments; but I had read too much—not having read enough—and laid down rules for my conduct, without examining the consequences of them. I expected to find the world, like my own family, all subservient to my will, and ready to pay the utmost deference to my opinions. Instead of which, I have met with nothing but insult and mortification; and, not being able to encounter either, my temper has become irritable at the slightest touch; and people have shewn me, that they did not think themselves obliged to put up with my ill humours or caprices. You have been my best friend, Mr. Walpole—you have taught me to know myself. I have long been struggling to open my heart, and lay all its weaknesses before you—but pride withheld me—I was ashamed to acknowledge, that I had set out in life on a wrong pursuit; but, for the future, I will bury myself in obscurity. The man who has been once looked upon as eccentric in his opinions, even whilst he is condemned, meets with a sort of respect:

—no

—no one very well understands his character, and he has often credit for a vast deal more reason than he possesses, or he is a novelty, and therefore he is courted; but if he chances to throw aside his prejudices, and become as other men, he dwindles into insignificance, or, what is worse, is frequently a mark for fools to level their wit at. I will not go into the world again,” he cried—“it shall never be said that Mr. Eldwin has found out, at last, that he has been acting the part of a fool! No; if I have resolution to acknowledge this to myself, I have not courage, Mr. Walpole, to tell it to the world.”

The latter stood looking at him with an eye that spoke every feeling of his great and benevolent heart—he wrung his hands in silence—it was some seconds before he could utter a word—at length, he cried—“I knew it would be so—I always said the young man’s heart was in the right place, and this confession of his error proves that it is so. There is nothing that recommends people to my notice so much as ingenuousness; it bespeaks universal

versal favour, and carries along with it an apology for almost every failing. Now," he continued, "let me see that you have a mind above the common prejudices of the million, and appear in your own character."

Mr. Eldwin started.—"What!" said he, "be looked upon as a vane, shifting to every point of the compass—a versatile, capricious being, without resolution to be any thing—flying from the world one moment, and disdaining all its pleasures—the next rushing into the very heart of them. It will not do, Sir. Men, I am persuaded, would be oftener much better if the world would give them leave; but it has its laws, to which the strongest minds must pay tribute."

"And what is this mighty bugbear this world is composed of," said Mr. Walpole, "that you have not been afraid to expose your follies to it—and that it is only your virtues that you blush to have seen? Will the wise man honour you less for your being willing to retrieve your errors,  
by



by acting, for the future, with consistency?—or do you tremble for what the ignorant shall say?”

“Neither,” said Mr. Eldwin. “I should care as little for the one, as for the other, if I could govern myself. I must be every thing, or nothing; and my prejudices have taken such deep root, that I know not how to give them up. My temper, too, is for ever subjecting me to some inconvenience—it will not submit to become subservient to others. I once thought my happiness quite independent of every one; but, in this last affair, much as I loved Angelina, I was willing she should sacrifice her peace to mine.”

“If you have courage,” said Mr. Walpole, “to own that your temper is not good, by the same reason you have power to mend it—let the world see that you have the resolution of a man—shew them,” he cried, “the greatest victory in nature—the subduing the passions!—he who conquers nations is not a greater hero.”

“I feel

"I feel easier already," said Mr. Eldwin, "now I have opened my heart to you.—'The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, of good and ill together. Our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our vices would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues!'" So said that great judge of the human heart, Shakespeare—and I feel the force of his words at this moment; but I owe it all to your friendship—no one else took the trouble to remind me that I was wrong.—I have always found myself in the right when I obeyed your counsels—for the future you shall be my guide—model me as you like," he cried, taking Mr. Walpole's hand.

"I will, my dear boy—I will; we will make a tour through the kingdom, and see every thing that is worthy of notice—there is nothing that rouses the mind so effectually, as the change of scene."

Mr. Walpole was as good as his word, and the next day they set out together.

In

In the mean time Angelina had quitted Richmond. Ethelind, with the consent of her father, had given her hand to Sir Frederick Marsdale.—The match was not altogether agreeable to her Ladyship:—he was an only son, and though his fortune was not equal to *her* wishes, he had a heart that amply compensated for its deficiency. This, however, with her, was a very poor recommendation; for the frankness of his temper did not accord with the littleness of her Ladyship's mind. Sir Edward presented the former with the house in Portland Place, that had been fitted up for the reception of Mr. Eldwin. Here Angelina had been with them for some time after their marriage. It was Sir Edward's intention to board her in some private family—he would not be prevailed on to see her—she remained at Sir Frederick's quite in private; and, by the former's command, she did not appear before any company.

In this retirement she endeavoured to subdue the painful reflections that had destroyed her peace; she strove to be content

tent with her fate, by resuming those amusements that so often had afforded her pleasure in her happier days ; and by this means she recovered a tolerable degree of composure.

Angelina had been in Portland Place near six weeks, when ; one day, as she was sitting at work with Ethelind, Sir Frederick, who had left them in the morning to go to Windsor, entered with a look and manner so unlike himself, that she dreaded to ask what had happened. Ethelind anxiously inquired if he was ill? He affected to laugh off their fears ; but the composure he assumed was too artificial to escape detection. Just as the servant was bringing in dinner, he beckoned Angelina (unperceived by Ethelind) to follow him, and went out of the room—she found him in the hall.—“ I will not deny,” said he, “ that there is a cause for my appearing thus unexpectedly. Do not be alarmed—but Sir Edward has met with an accident in hunting this morning—he fell from his horse—He is himself apprehensive of the worst consequences ; but, I trust, his fears  
are

are groundless—the hurt he has received is internal. He is anxious to see you—you tremble—dare you venture to go?”

“Ought I to hesitate?” she cried—“he is my father—I am ready to obey him.”

“How shall I break it to Ethelind?” said Sir Frederick: “she must not know it. The last words he spoke, as I left him, were, ‘I will only see Angelina.’ I will, therefore, go to Ethelind, and frame some excuse for taking you with me to Park Place. In the mean time, you will get ready to accompany me, and I will shortly attend you.”

The carriage was ordered.—During their ride, Sir Frederick strove to prepare Angelina to meet Sir Edward with composure.

When they reached the house, she inquired anxiously for Lady Eldwin. The servants said she was with their master; and, with faltering steps, she hurried to his chamber; where, stretched upon the bed



of sickness, lay Sir Edward Eldwin. A few hours before, his heart was proudly triumphing in its fancied security—now every object appeared to him in a very different point of view—his conscience stood up his accuser—it laid before him all the pursuits of his past life—he trembled—for it pointed to the future!

Angelina went towards his bed—Lady Eldwin looked haughtily upon her, without speaking. She heard the former say—“Where is Angelina?—will she not come to me?”

“She is here,” said Sir Frederick, undrawing the curtains—“she comes to bring you peace.”

“Not in that form,” cried he, looking wildly on her—“for she bears too strongly the semblance of her injured mother!—Do not look at me, Angelina—I cannot bear thy affectionate regard. There is in our nature,” said he, “an instinctive horror, that we feel when we gaze upon the venomous reptile,—Does not a sensation  
somewhat

somewhat like this creep through every vein in your heart, as you look upon me?—Dost thou not feel, at this moment, Angelina, that I have injured thee past all atonement?”

—“Dear Sir,” said she, her utterance almost choaked with tears, yet pressing his hand tenderly—“compose yourself—for my sake—for *all* our sakes!”

—“Hate me!—fly!,” he cried—“where is the spirit of thy injured mother, that it does not stand before thee with reproaches, for taking part with the man who murdered all her happiness!—But it will soon be over—retribution is at hand—I have triumphed long enough!—Triumphed, did say! What happiness have I experienced?—None:—a prisoner, amidst all my greatness—my heart incased in its own infamy, and fretted by the chains its villany forged!”

With a wildness in his look and manner, he said, taking both her hands in his, “Mark me, Angelina—I once knew a  
man

man, of seeming integrity, who was in the confidence of a young nobleman, to whom he was distantly related; the latter was an only son, and heir to great wealth—he married a young woman, his equal in goodness, though not in birth—for which the Earl, his father, disinherited him. In vain he supplicated a parent's forgiveness; for, generously though unwittingly, putting confidence in the man who had supplanted him, the villain took advantage of his unsuspecting nature, and the letters which should have been delivered by him into the hands of the offended parent, never met his sight:—they were withheld, to forward the ambitious hopes of the former. In consequence thereof, the young man left the kingdom with his wife, and went to Geneva; where they had not been settled above six months, before he was seized with a fever, that carried him off in less than a week. To complete the misfortunes of his lady, she was at this time confined to her chamber, having been brought to bed of her first child a few days before.—Her family had been

as much incensed as his; and knowing no one else to whom she could apply, she wrote to the man in whom her unfortunate husband had relied with implicit faith.

“ He received her when she came to England; but the shock she had sustained had affected her senses, and she was in a state of insanity, from which not even the smiles of her infant could rouse her. Interest was made with her friends to receive her; and she was placed in a private situation, where she remained many years. The woman who had the care of her infant was bribed to secrecy; and, to this hour, it is supposed to be buried in the grave of its father.” He paused — “ What think you,” said he, “ of this villain, Angelina?”

“ Do not look so wildly on me, dear Sir!” she cried, trembling—his hand was wet with her tears—“ You must not talk thus—you do not know what you are saying—you will be better if you will compose yourself.”

“ Pray

“ Pray for me !” said he.

“ I do pray,” she cried, “ fervently, that you may be restored *to us—to yourself!*”

“ Heaven will not hear you,—your mother will interpose, and call upon her child to avenge her wrongs !”

“ Never !” cried Angelina—“ if she was here, she would pray for you too !—she was the very spirit of forgiveness—for her last moments were spent in begging Heaven to pardon those who had injured her. You think too much of what is past—*Father,*” said she—“ look upon me !” It was the first time in her life that she had ever called him by that name.

He started at the sound—“ Load me with reproaches !” he exclaimed—“ curse me, and I will listen to you—but do not pity me !”



She hid her face with her hand, and sobbed aloud. Sir Edward had raised himself up—he gazed on her with a look of anguish, as if big with some important truth, that he wanted courage to disclose.

Sir Frederick, who had watched his eager look, was alarmed at the sudden change of his countenance—he intreated him to compose himself, and begged Angelina to leave the room.

“No,” said he, in great agitation, “she shall stay—she is young—she does not know what Vice is—and I will tell her:”—taking her hand, in a hurried tone, he continued,—“She will put on a thousand forms to seduce thee—watch every avenue to thy heart;—the first moment it is unguarded, she will come before thee, bribe thee with such promises as thou wilt not have courage to resist—and when she has taken possession, and silenced the voice of reason, she will do as she has done by me”—(laying his hand on his heart, with an expression of horror)

horror)—“ she will awaken thee to fear, guilt, and misery !

“ I have trampled on the laws of hospitality—I have put on the mask of friendship, to divide the interest of father and son—I have seen an amiable woman fall a victim to my ambition, and sink, unpitied, into the arms of death—I have buried her child in obscurity, and, unlawfully, possessed myself of her estates—yet *once* I was a man of principle—*once* I had a heart uncorrupt, till my passions became my masters, and I had no will to direct them—pride and ambition led me on, step after step—and now, behold the enormities I have committed !—Didst thou mark, Angelina, the story of the young nobleman and his friend?—didst thou not shudder as I repeated it?—did not the voice of nature speak to thee, call upon thy heart to acknowledge an interest in the fate of that unfortunate young man?—for thou art no child of Sir Edward Eldwin—no child of Mrs. Montague—thou art”—said he, raising his voice in extreme agony—“ the daughter of

the young Earl of Treclanna—and I, the masked friend, the villain who betrayed him!" His voice faltered—he looked wildly round him—uttered a convulsive groan—and sunk back upon his pillow.

Angelina was taken out of his chamber senseless, while the surgeon supported *him*, with the assistance of Sir Frederick. By the order of the physician, who then entered, Lady Eldwin, and Miss Dorothy retired.

As soon as Sir Frederick had heard the doctor's opinion, he followed her Ladyship—"Be comforted, Madam," said he—"Sir Edward's fears have magnified his danger—the physician bids me assure you that, if he is kept quiet, there is nothing to fear."

"Oh! as to that," she cried, "if it had been *God's will* to have taken him, I should have been very resigned, provided he had not talked in the manner that he has to Angelina. I hope, Sir, you have too much generosity to take  
any

any notice of what Sir Edward has said, as it is plain he was delirious."

"If you are so certain, Madam, that there was no truth in what he said, where is the necessity of concealment?—but if, on the contrary, it is as I suspect, you ought to rejoice at the opportunity, which now presents itself, of making some reparation for all the injuries done to this amiable young creature."

"Heaven give me patience to hear you talk thus!—Why, Sir, you would not be so base as to repeat what you have heard! I wish he had died," said she, "before he had uttered such things!"—crying vehemently—"There were no witnesses with us but ourselves—besides, you are a *lawyer*, you know; therefore you can settle it in any way you please—and Angelina has no *friends*, except us."

"My profession, Madam," said he, indignantly, "shall never make a villain of me. The law was not meant for a screen to hide bad men's actions—it was

intended to redress the wrongs of those who have no other shelter to retire to from the persecution of the wicked."

"Very fine, Sir!—but, perhaps, you won't be so mighty scrupulous, when I remind you, that, if Sir Edward is forced to give up the estates, there will be no money for Ethelind."

"It is true, Madam," he answered, "my fortune is not large, and your daughter's might have been an acquisition. On her account, I shall consider it a loss—but we shall not be less happy without it—she will learn to circumscribe her wishes—this I am sure of, she has too noble a mind to desire more, when the price of it must be the loss of her husband's honour!"

"I have no patience," said her Ladyship, "with such low notions!—you talk as vulgar, Sir, as if you had been brought up in a merchant's counting-house in the city. You make such a fuss about honesty, that one would think it could  
feed



feed people—give them great houses to live in—clothe them in the most splendid dress, and make them the envy of all their acquaintances !”

“ And so it does, Madam—for when men can wrap themselves up in their own integrity, they can put on no richer covering. But, to be plain with you, when our inclination is not in unison with our duty, which, think you, ought to be made the sacrifice? If men, who are the ministers of justice, are to act only as their will directs, and that will is not subservient to reason, there can be no virtue in law. It often happens, in the course of practice, that we are called upon to act against our interest, by meeting in opposition our best friends:—in such cases, an honest man would divest himself of all partiality, and meet each party upon equal ground—examine, with an unprejudiced eye, the merits of each case, and give in his judgment accordingly, unbiassed by favour. Men of the profession, by acting thus, render themselves dependable and useful members of society; and you may be assured, that

I will not rest till I see this young lady put in possession of her rights, though it should cost me the favour of the whole family to establish her!" With these words, which were uttered with a great degree of sincerity, he left Lady Eldwin to her own reflections—dispatched a few lines to East-Cliff, addressed to Mrs. Summers—and then went in search of Angelina, whom he found somewhat recovered, though still greatly affected.

Sir Frederick was interested in her concerns more than she was aware of; for his being related to Mrs. Summers, made him well acquainted with the history of Angelina's parents."

At first he found it difficult to persuade her, that there was any truth in what Sir Edward had advanced; till he assured her that such a report had prevailed at East-Cliff, from the very striking remembrance she bore to the late unfortunate Lady Treclannna—that old Arden had not scrupled to hint his suspicions that all was not so fair as it should

should be. He then gave Angelina all the intelligence he could relative to her family—"That the late Earl, her grandfather, on whose death Sir Edward came to the estates, was a man of a noble and generous nature: but as there are shades in the brightest character, that of family pride partially obscured his. He had but one son—to him he looked up as the future support of that dignity he so highly valued. Men very frequently erect ideal standards, that they are determined others shall arrive at, without considering what impediments may be thrown in the way.—Thus the Earl had resolved his son should marry no woman who could not boast a lineage equally ennobled as his own. There subsisted between him and Mr. Avordale a more than common degree of intimacy; and, during the time he usually spent at East-Cliff, the families were seldom divided.

"The young men (for at that time Mr. Avordale had likewise a son) were much together, and his sisters, Mrs. Summers,

and the one deceased were frequently with them—the latter was then young and beautiful—the Earl attached himself particularly to *her*. Is it to be wondered, that his son, who was but a youth, should become enamoured of her? Thus it was, however—for, as soon as he came of age, without deliberating upon the consequence, he married her, unknown to them all.

“ It seems that Mr. Avordale suffered as much from an over-scrupulous delicacy, as the Earl did from offended pride—each were alike obdurate—the former conceived that his daughter had injured his friend and patron, and no intreaties could prevail on him to see her;—the Earl was equally obstinate, forgetting that he himself had exposed his son to this act of disobedience.

“ Mr. Arden interposed between both parties, but to no effect—for it was always suspected, that the old man was privy to his young Lord's intention.

“ It

“ It seems that Sir Edward Eldwin was the confidential friend to whom this secret was entrusted ; he was deputed to be a mediator between the young Lord and his father. How he betrayed the trust, he has himself acknowledged. The Earl, as far as was in his power, disinherited him, which was the cause of his leaving England to settle in Geneva, where he died.

“ What became of the young lady I am utterly ignorant ;—her name is never mentioned in Mr. Avordale’s family. Mrs. Summers will be in town in a few days, and then it will be finally known whether you are her sister’s daughter or not. Sir Edward’s anxiety to marry you to his son seems now unravelled, since it is plain his object was to secure your fortune ;—that, if by any accident your birth should be discovered, the Treclanna estates would still remain in his family’s possession.”

This account, as was natural, deeply affected Angelina ; her heart made no  
resistance



resistance to sorrow—it surrendered itself up to all the tender affections which Nature has planted in the human breast, and which she had so deeply rooted in Angelina's.

Sir Frederick judged it would be painful to her feelings to remain under Sir Edward's roof that night; and not choosing she should return with him, from motives of the nicest delicacy, he went to his mother to prepare her for the reception of Miss Aubrey, till it should be finally known to what other name she was entitled.

Lady Marsdale received her with great politeness and hospitality, and she remained with her three days, in a state of the most painful solicitude.

Sir Frederick had seen her in that time twice or thrice, but she could not learn from him that any thing farther had transpired relative to herself.

CHAP.

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CHAP. VIII.

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THE fourth day after that on which she had seen Sir Edward, Mrs. Summers and old Arden arrived in town, but it was not till after they had been at Park Place that she was summoned to appear. She met the former with a heart too full for utterance—Mrs. Summers pressed her to her bosom, and burst into an agony of tears. “Dear Angelina,” was all she could utter for some minutes;—even old Arden could only press her hand in silence.

At length Mrs. Summers recovered sufficiently to tell her, that she had seen Sir Edward, and every thing relating to her birth had been explained in the presence of his whole family.—He had given up the certificate of her father’s (the young Lord Treclanna) marriage, with the  
register

register of her birth—at the same time resigning all claim and title to the Treclanna estates.

—“ And my mother !” cried Angelina, with quickness—“ tell me of her !”

“ She was the young Lady Treclanna,” said old Arden, “ the daughter of Mr. Avordale and the sister of Mrs. Summers—take her, Madam, to your bosom, for she has long wanted your protection.”

“ I am bewildered with conjecture !” exclaimed Angelina—“ What am I to think of Mrs. Montague ?—Good Angels, look upon me in this hour, and support me !”

“ You will be *supported*, my love,” said Mrs. Summers—“ listen to me, and then acknowledge, with gratitude, the peculiar manner in which your wrongs have been redressed. I have seen the woman who nursed you—she was the person who went abroad with my sister,  
and

and was present at your birth, on the 27th of February, in the year 82. On the death of your father, my sister quitted Geneva, and this woman accompanied her back to England, in the capacity of nurse to you. She was so overwhelmed with affliction for the loss of her Lord, that, during the voyage, there was a wildness in her manner that alarmed her servant; and, before she left the vessel, she became insensible to every thing around her."

" This person acknowledges, that, on coming on shore, she was perplexed how to act; but, recollecting to have heard her mistress talk of Sir Edward Eldwin, she immediately applied to him. He, finding the melancholy situation into which your mother was plunged, offered her attendant a handsome annuity if she would take it upon her to secrete her infant daughter: this she owns having consented to, annually receiving from Sir Edward the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds for her fidelity. About two months after she had you under her care,

Sir

Sir Edward came to her, (for she then lived in a retired village, in Gloucestershire) and knowing he had a claim to her confidence, he entrusted her with his amour with Mrs. Montague, who there went by the name of Beverly. Not being able, from excess of grief, to take proper care of the child she was then delivered of, it was entrusted to this woman to nurse;—she, however, had it but a few weeks before it died. There was but little difference between its age and your's; and, being a girl, Sir Edward thought it no difficult matter to impose you upon Mrs. Montague as her child, and at the same time rid him of an incumbrance. This was effected to his wishes; and, to the day of her death, she believed you to be her daughter.

“ Sir Edward wishing to conceal you, and at the same time introducing you into his family, was for this reason—That, feeling his conscience reproach him for the injuries he had committed, he thought, by marrying you to his son, he should appease it, as you would then be in possession of your lawful rights.

“You



“ You see, my dear Angelina, the very means by which he thought to secure himself, has been the cause of bringing his villany to light;—his designs have been frustrated, and he now lies a shocking example of the certain consequences of guilt. But we have to thank his fears for this disclosure, since it was to relieve his own mind that he made it; but, shocking as this is, it is not the worst of his conduct.

“ When my sister returned from abroad in this terrible state, Sir Edward applied to my father:—what our feelings were on receiving her, I will not shock you by repeating. The old Earl was then living, and, at his desire, she was removed to a small distance from us, where every thing was allowed her that her most extravagant wishes could frame. She was indulged in all her wildnesses, and he would not allow of her being any farther controled, than to preserve her from exposing herself to danger.

“ Some

“ Some of us constantly saw her once a fortnight; and the last time, my father went himself with Mr. Wilmot:—but judge of their feelings, when they were told that she had been dead some days, of a putrid fever! It was this shock that hastened the former to his grave—her going out of the world so suddenly, without any of our family about her, would not admit of reflection!—and though it was an event which, in her situation, ought not to have been regretted, yet the circumstances that attended it rendered it shocking to humanity.—Mr. Arden,” said Mrs. Summers, “ I cannot tell her the rest—speak to her for me.”

Angelina looked alarmed.—“ What new calamity !” she cried :—“ after what I have heard, I can bear any thing—Tell me, Mr. Arden.”

“ You must compose yourself, young Lady. — Sir Edward”——Mr. Arden paused.”

“ What

“What of him?” she asked eagerly.

“He has owned, Lady, that your mother did not then *die*—for finding, by the people where she was confined, that she gave evident symptoms of returning reason—and fearing that, if she had been taken into the bosom of her family, the recollection of her infant, which she brought with her to England, might return to her mind, he bribed the people to secrecy, and to impose a servant upon them, who died at that time of a putrid fever; and so well he succeeded in his plan, that the body was interred by Mr. Avordale’s orders in his family vault, with that privacy which was due to her misfortunes; not suspecting the imposition that was practised, the disorder being such, that it was impossible to recognise her person.

“Thus Sir Edward was again successful—he had your mother, in the mean time, conveyed privately to the Castle, not at that moment knowing where else to place her. Oliver, his servant, was his confidant, and was instructed to persuade

suade the domestics into a belief, that the north turret, and chambers in which she was confined, were haunted. I, however, was not to be thus duped—I saw there was something amiss in this conduct—I had long had my suspicions concerning the fate of my young master—but I held the former in too much contempt to inquire into his actions.

“When he brought you, my young Lady, with his family, to East-Cliff, I own I was struck by the resemblance you bore to the Earl’s family—that, and your own gentle manners, so different from the rest of them, made me treat you with more respect than I paid to any one else. An old man’s prejudices are strong, and I loved to gather the fruit and flowers for you, as I had often done for the late Lady when she was your age. I don’t love to be thanked, when what I do is to please myself—and I was used to place them in your chamber window unknown to you.

“That picture which you looked upon, when I led you through the rooms,  
was

was the portrait of your father. The removal of it, soon after, which so much perplexed you, was by Sir Edward's orders:—the reason is now obvious—he had not courage to look upon it.”

“ But, of my mother!” said Angelina —“ tell me more of her.”

The old man paused.

“ Mr. Arden,” said she, “ I beseech you to tell me—The sigh I heard was in the north chamber—the coffin I gazed upon at midnight, under my window, was carried to the turret.”

“ It was for your mother!” he cried—  
 “ Don’t look so wildly, young Lady—she is out of the reach of calamity!—Sir Edward confesses that she died in those chambers. He was at Bristol when she was taken suddenly ill, and came home unexpected by the family, as you may remember. The Lady Treclanna lived but a very few days after, and was buried at midnight in the east side of the chapel.  
 You



You will hear more from the sister of Oliver, who was the woman Sir Edward entrusted to attend her:—this person was with the poor Lady in her last moments—Come, come, take comfort—let me,” said he, “see that you are indeed the child of my honoured Lord—shew me that you possess that firmness and greatness of mind which so ennobled your father !”

“ You shall”—she cried, striving to appear composed—“ I will endeavour to forget the past—But, O ! Mr. Arden—my mother !—her sufferings—when but a few chambers parted us !—I was then gay and happy, enjoying the comforts—nay, more, the luxuries of life ; for I was at liberty, and my only parent, within the same walls, a prisoner, where she should have commanded !—I heard her sigh—I looked upon her coffin without feeling any other emotion than a stranger would have felt ! When she was ill, and languishing, who was there with her that could speak comfort, and bid her live !—Perhaps treated with indignity by the wretches about her—and when her reason  
returned

returned, and might have been permanently fixed, the reflection of what had passed, and the mystery of her situation, might again have bewildered her!—And to die—and to die thus—horrible thought!—whilst I was an inmate of the same house—perhaps at the very moment courting the attention of the man who was the cause of all her sorrows! Shall I not weep at such injuries, Mr. Arden—must I not feel them!”

Mrs. Summers was greatly distressed, and old Arden, whilst he bid her not feel, was forced to turn away from her, to hide how much he was affected. He endeavoured to change the discourse, and talked of her establishment; but she did not attend to what he said. She sat thoughtful, without speaking, for some time: at last she said, earnestly—“I am thinking how happy I was when I first went to East-Cliff.”

“And you will be happier when you go again,” said he.

“Never!” she cried; “for *then* I thought every person was in reality what they appeared to be, and I was not afraid of being deceived. *Now*, I shall think when people smile, and look kind upon me, that it is only a MASK, which they wear to cover their *evil intentions*.”

Heaven forbid that your young heart should have learned so harsh a lesson! It is enough for an old man, like me, to talk thus, who have lived some score years in the world:—you, my dear Lady, are but just enterering upon it, with a prospect of as much happiness before you, as commonly falls to the lot of mortals. Suspicion but freezes up every noble faculty of the soul; and it would be better that you should be deceived all your life long, than keep so close a watch over the hearts of others, as never to be deceived at all.”

——“And yet,” said she, “I could wish that I had never come to the knowledge of my birth, since I have exchanged  
ed

ed my simplicity for it; the one is by no means an equivalent for the other."

"I am sorry you think so—I expected very different sentiments from the daughter of Lord Treclanna—I thought to have made the hearts of our villagers rejoice, when I told them who was coming among them. There was a time when the name of Treclanna was music to every ear. My young master had a heart as merciful as it was brave;—but, though he was descended from one of the most honourable families, he was more dignified by nature than birth; for, had he been born of the poorest peasant in the kingdom, the greatness of his mind would have ennobled him."

The energy with which he spoke roused Angelina.—To administer comfort to the afflicted, feed the hungry, and bid the heart of poverty rejoice, was a luxury she had tasted of sufficiently to know the bliss that attended it.

“ Mr. Arden,” said she, holding out her hand to him, “ I thank you for this reproof; for the future, I will endeavour to deserve your regard. Riches were intended for a blessing—Sir Edward misused the gift—the trust is now delegated to me, and I will study to prove them so.”

The old man’s heart swelled with rapture as he contemplated the happiness that was in store for her. “ Behold, my young Lady, what a goodly prospect opens to your view! I see you already the friend of the unfortunate;—wherever I turn, blessings follow your name—peace and innocence accompany your steps—the honour of the family will be redeemed, and *then*, I shall be content to die. My heart has been so long a stranger to joy, that it has made an old man talkative.” He then kissed her hand respectfully, and retired.

Mrs. Summers, much fatigued by the exertions she had lately undergone, withdrew to rest. Angelina then went to her



her chamber, where she was glad to ruminate on the late eventful discovery. It was too wonderful to pass over without the mind's resting to examine the secret spring which directed it, and her bosom swelled with devotional ardour as she contemplated the inscrutable ways of Providence, in bringing to light such complicated wickedness. Her heart went up in prayer to Heaven, that she might maintain this change of fortune with humility. She thought of Montague with rapture; and when the recollection of Sir Edward rushed upon her mind, it was in a fervent petition for his recovery; that he who had so unmercifully persecuted her, might hereafter, by the advantage of repentance, be better able to answer for his crimes.

Mrs. Summers remained in town upwards of two months with Angelina, in which time the best council had been consulted.

It was first proposed, that Sir Edward should be brought formally to trial, for

having withheld, unlawfully, the Tre-clanna estates.

But Angelina wished the gentlest measures might be used for the sake of his children; and as he voluntarily renounced all claim to the possession of them, such a procedure was afterwards thought unnecessary.

Sir Edward, upon his recovery, was called upon to give a very minute account of the circumstances attending the decease of the late Lady, on which some doubts were entertained. The servants, who attended her in the Castle, were likewise closely examined concerning her, and their accounts exactly corresponding, her death appeared to be natural.

Upon the marriage of Angelina's father, the Earl was so far incensed, that he determined never to acknowledge his son; and, pleased with Sir Edward Eldwin, who knew the way to most men's hearts, he adopted him for his heir to the personal estate; the other he could not

not withhold from the young Lord, being his by right of birth. When this unfortunate Nobleman died, the old Earl was so struck by the unhappy fate of his son, that, for some time, he seemed indifferent to every thing which concerned him; till Sir Edward, by his obsequious manners, ingratiated himself into his favour; when the former made his will entirely to Sir Edward's satisfaction, leaving him heir to the Treclanna estates, although he had no hereditary claim to them, being only related to the Earl by marriage. The personal property was left to him conditionally:—in case the unhappy widow of his son should recover her reason, it was to devolve on *her*; if otherwise, the interest was to be retained by Sir Edward, and, on his death, to be divided in charities, nominated in the Will.

At the beginning of this business, it was apprehended that Angelina would not be able to claim the estates, which were considerable, till the will of her great grandfather was produced, wherein

it appeared that they were entailed, in default of male issue, upon the daughter or daughters of the family ; and by this means she was permanently established in her rights, by the name and title of Lady Albina Treclanna, called Angelina only as the name given to the child of Mrs. Montague, and which she was compelled to assume, to pass for the daughter of that Lady.

She became likewise entitled to that property which should have devolved to her mother. During this time, Albina remained with the Dowager Lady Marsdale, sister to Mr. Walpole, and a distant relation of the Avordales.

The house in Park Place became her's by right :—it was fitted up for her reception, and Mrs. Summers and Lucy were to reside with her.

A few days before she was to quit London with the former, she called on Ethelind, in Portland Place. Whilst they were together, the latter was sent for down, to speak with a stranger. On entering

tering the room, she found Montague there. He seemed much affected at the sight of her—congratulated her upon her marriage with his friend, Sir Frederick Marsdale—and, after some hesitation, enquired for Angelina.

Ethelind immediately discovered that he was a stranger to what had had happened in the family; and, without answering his question, she asked him, How long he had been in town?

“Not three hours,” said he: “but I have been miserable at not receiving any intelligence from her.—I came hither to relieve my anxiety, but I fear, by your countenance”—pausing, and looking earnestly at her.

—“That Angelina is not here,” cried Ethelind. “What of that?—you have determined never to see her more;—a very laudable resolve—and what you will not think of retracting.”

“Dont trifle with my feelings,” said he, impatiently;—“is Angelina—is my



sister well—dearest Ethelind, tell me—where is she—and how are her spirits?—why don't you answer me?"

"I was waiting to hear if you had any more questions to ask, that I might have resolved them all together."

"I cannot bear this nonsense!" said he, with warmth—"trifle upon any subject but this."

"That is to say, Montague, you have a great command over your feelings, whilst no one attempts to wound them;—don't fear—I am not going to put them any farther to the test—for as you take such warm interest in the concerns of Angelina, it must give you pleasure to hear of her good fortune—she has changed her name."

"How!" said he—"my Angelina married!"

"It is not very usual," Ethelind returned, "for ladies to change it on any other

other condition. I knew how sincerely *you* would rejoice on the occasion."

"Certainly," said he, not knowing what he answered.—"My Angelina married!" he repeated; walking up and down the room agitated;—"would that I had been in England!"

"And what if you had?" cried Ethelind—"you certainly would not have prevented her from being raised so much above her expectation—for she has the title of Lady conferred on her, and is mistress of a noble fortune."

"All the honours in the world are not an equivalent to the fortune she brings. Who is there that can estimate her worth?—she has a thousand virtues that are hid from a common observer—a thousand graces that can only be called forth by those who are acquainted with her diffidence—she has a mind above the ostentation of wealth; and if she has been made a sacrifice of, I swear ——"

“ No, don’t swear, Montague ; for if she should be unhappy in her marriage—”

“ What !” he interrupted, “ shall I submit to see her insulted ?—Let any one dare offer the slightest indignity to her, and they shall know that she has a brother.”

“ Take my word for it, Montague, if the man she loves treats her ill, you will be the first to take his part.—‘ At lovers’ perjuries, they say, Jove laughs !’”

“ Ethelind,” said he gravely, “ that I loved her, is true—how much, the loss of my peace of mind can testify ;—but she is my sister now.”

“ And do you never forget that she is ?”

“ I hope not,” he answered, startled by the question ;—“ but tell me, how does she bear her new dignity ?—does she retain all her native simplicity ?—is she as unassuming and gentle as ever ?”

“ If

"If it is possible, she appears in a more amiable light than ever; as even those whom she has most reason to condemn she studiously avoids giving pain to by uttering the least unpleasant reflections."

"Heaven bless her!" said he, with great feeling.—He paused—after a moment, he said—"No; I will not see her—it is plain I cannot look upon her as I would do.—Does she ever speak of me, Ethelind?"

"Not very often; but I have a great notion that she *thinks* of you; for whenever we mention your name, she sighs and colours."

"Then why not have consulted me before she had taken this important step? I would not have dissuaded her, if I had thought it would have been for her advantage."

"Perhaps she wrote, and you did not receive her letters."

"True,

“ True ; that, indeed, is not unlikely.— She sighs when you mention my name !” said he, musing—“ that is strange—perhaps she wishes to see me.”

“ *Perhaps* she does.”

“ Then, at all events,” said he, “ I will go to her.”

“ No, don’t ; for she may not think you the properest person to open her mind to—she may forget you are her brother, and feel a sort of trembling when you address her as thus—‘ My beloved, my dearest Angelina,’ says ‘ you, it shall be the study of Montague’s life to deserve your confidence ;’—with a thousand pretty speeches of lively interest in your welfare—pure, and ardent affection—very *natural*, you know, from a brother to a sister ; whilst Angelina, with a mind too ingenuous to practise deceit, generously confides in you—you learn the secret of her heart, and then, perhaps, you will be satisfied whether she has disposed of it to advantage or not.”

Ethelind



Ethelind laughed.—“ One would think,” continued she, “ that I had offered you one of the problems in Euclid to solve, you look so serious!—I see you are not pleased with Angelina’s good luck; so I will not say another word about her, but talk to you of yourself; for, if you have a mind to make your fortune, now is your time:—there is a rich young heiress in the drawing-room, a lady by birth, very amiable, and as lovely as Miss Aubrey.—Nay, Montague, don’t look so angry!—such prizes are not drawn every day.”

“ Pshaw!” said he, “ I don’t want to see her;—what are her titles or her wealth to me?—I hate your women of fortune.”

“ That is the first illiberal prejudice I ever heard you utter; and, take my word for it, that it will not be your fault that you do not marry one.”

“ This is not to the purpose,” said he; —“ tell me of Angelina.”

"If you want intelligence of her," said Ethelind, "you must apply to the young stranger—if any one is in her confidence, it is Lady Albina."

Indeed!—and does she say that my sister is happy?"

"She would tell you, I believe, that she is *very happy*."

"Then she would wish to deceive me."

"She has done *that* long enough; and I fancy that now she would *wish* to *undeceive* you.—Will you venture up stairs?"

"I am very indifferent," returned Montague, "unless I was *sure* that she knew Angelina."

"I can only give you my word for it," said she.

"I will take it, then," he answered, and followed Ethelind, who was pleasing herself

herself with the surprise they would mutually feel on this occasion.

As she opened the door of the drawing-room, she said—"I bring you a gentleman, Lady Albina, who is much interested in the fate of Miss Aubrey.—Will you endeavour to satisfy him that she is happy."

She was in deep mourning for her mother, and, for a moment, Montague did not recognize her.—Her spirits were weak, and they were so overcome with surprise, that she had nearly fainted. He sprung forward, and caught her to his bosom in an agony—"My Angelina! my sister!" was all he could utter.

"Her face was crimsoned over in a moment—she hid it on Ethelind's arm, and burst into tears.

Montague's feelings, on seeing her thus affected, could not have been analysed—he would have quitted the room until he could have commanded them;

them; but Ethelind stopped him.—He looked reproachfully at her, as if he would have said—“Was it well to deceive me thus?”

“I have not deceived you at all,” cried Ethelind; “I promised to introduce you to Lady Albina.—I have done so—and, now, the least civility you can pay to her Ladyship, is to hear what she has to say to you:”—and, looking archly at the latter, she quitted the room.

Albina’s situation was now truly embarrassing. Montague took her hand, and, after a pause, he said—“I meant not, my Angelina, to have broken in upon you thus abruptly; but I was surprised into this intrusion by Ethelind, who has acquainted me with what has happened; but has referred me to you for particulars.—All I ask,—is my sister happy?”

Lady Albina looked surprised.—“She has not told you, then, Mr. Montague, that I have no claim to that title?”

“I don’t

"I don't comprehend you,—unless you think it necessary to forget me."

"That is not in my power," thought Albina, and she held out her hand to him.

"Why did you marry before I came to England?"

"Marry!" she exclaimed.

"You have changed your name," said Montague, looking stedfastly at her.

"I have," she answered; "but I am not married, Sir."

"Then whose name is it you bear?" asked he, with quickness.

"My father's!" she answered with emotion:—"and, since it is left for me to explain this affair, I will endeavour to convince you that I have not disgraced it. When I was Angelina Aubrey, and slighted by those on whom I thought I had  
had



had a claim, you honoured me with your friendship; when it appeared by the manuscript addressed to me, from my ever regretted friend, you endeavoured to forget that I was the child of Sir Edward, and condescended to look upon me as a sister."—She paused.

"Go on," he cried, impatiently.

"Now," said she, "I have neither of these claims to interest your feelings:—it is a long story to repeat before you can know the circumstances attending the discovery of my birth. I was imposed on my much honoured Mrs. Montague as her child, when I was, in reality, the daughter of the young Lord Treclanna."

It was the sweetest sound that ever broke upon Montague's ear, and the excess of his joy almost amounted to agony.

She related to him all the particulars of what had passed from the time of his leaving England.

When

When she ceased speaking, he congratulated her upon the prospect which opened to her of lasting happiness—spoke of Mrs. Summers in the most flattering terms, and rejoiced that she had found in that excellent woman so near a relation. The villany of Sir Edward's conduct did not fail to excite his indignation.

“ May I,” said he, “ presume on the privilege I once had, to ask you, if you would have married Mr. Eldwin with your own consent ?”

“ Never !—if that had taken place, my happiness must have been made the sacrifice. Where is Lord Algernon, Mr. Montague ?”

“ At his house in the country, where I left him this morning. I came post to town, in anxiety to know why I had not heard from you.”

She assured him she had written when at Richmond, which letter he never received.

ceived. Lady Albina asked, if he was going out of town that day?

“Not for *many days*,” he answered;—  
“why do you inquire?”

“I leave London this week,” said she,  
“and I should have thought myself very unfortunate if I had not seen you. Mrs. Summers is obliged to return to East-Cliff, to be present at the marriage of Lucy with Mr. Wilmot. I am to accompany her, to take possession of East-Cliff, where she is to reside with me for the future. As it was uncertain when I should see you again, I have entrusted Ethelind to return you Mrs. Montague’s jewels.”

“Keep them for her sake,” said he.

“By no means,” she answered; “they are much too valuable, and I need no other memento than what her worth has engraven on my heart.”

“What

“What must *I* do with such baubles?” said Montague—“*I* cannot wear them.”

“Keep them, Sir, until you can hereafter present them to ——.” She paused—the eagerness with which he seemed to listen for what she was going to add confused her.

“To whom should I present them?”

“To one,” she answered, recovering her composure, “who may be entitled to them by possessing your affection.”

“So my father said,” cried Montague, “when he delivered them into my hands, whilst I was a boy; and it is in obedience to his will that I now present them to you.—You can be no stranger to my heart—you are too generous to trifle with it—for I doat on you with all the ardour of a lover, and the tenderness of a friend. Forgive the abrupt manner in which I have spoken, dearest Angelina—Lady Albina, I mean—for I would rather continue to  
endure

endure all the pangs of disappointed hope, than see you one moment unhappy !”

“ It was not in her nature to dissemble —She did not even wish to conceal from him the pleasure with which she received this declaration ; and, after some hesitation, he drew from her a frank avowal of her long and secret attachment to him.

Montague, in grateful rapture for this unaffected and ingenuous confession, owned that he thought his love for her could not have admitted of any augmentation ; till, by her late conduct, it was raised almost to adoration.

An hour had elapsed in a retrospection of past scenes before Ethelind had again entered. The artful manner in which she had drawn Montague into this interview with Angelina had two motives for its excuse :—the first, her volatile disposition could not resist this opportunity of surprising him ;—the second, it was not a tale for her to repeat ; for, however lively  
her



her nature, there were circumstances in it which she trembled even to think of. Mrs Summers was below, and Montague went down to speak to her.

Albina's heart (for the first time since the discovery of her birth) expanded to the taste of delight :—the fate of her mother had saddened every object ; but now she looked forward to enjoying the wealth so newly showered upon her, in the happy prospect that Montague would be with her to share it.

The week following was fixed for her departure from London. Montague was very earnest that their marriage should not be protracted—She was introduced by him to Lord Algernon, as his future niece. The latter had been acquainted with the attachment of his nephew to her, from the first :—as Miss Aubrey, he made many objections to his choice ; but as Lady Albina, he was proud to receive her into his family.

Mrs. Summers joined them in wishing the marriage to take place as soon as possible. She was well acquainted with the worth of Montague, and knew the importunities which Lady Albina would be subjected to without his protection.

She could make no reasonable objection, and the day fortnight after that in which she left London Montague was to follow her.

Miss Marsdale, Sir Frederick's sister, accompanied her to East-Cliff, and Mr. Walpole travelled with them.

Lady Albina saw Mr. Eldwin before she quitted London. The shock he received at the discovery of his father's guilt, was such as is better felt than described:—he could “condemn the fault, but not the actor.” He endeavoured to prove to her Ladyship, that all the late confusion of the family had arisen from Sir Edward's remorse for what had passed, and his wish to do Lady Albina justice in the proposed marriage between her and himself (Mr. Eldwin),  
which

which would have rendered to her and her children their rights, without exposing his former turpitude to the world. This plan also acquitted his father of the horrid suspicion of designing an incestuous marriage; as he well knew, though the miserable Mrs. Montague did not, that Angelina, as she was then called, was no way related to him. Mr. Eldwin farther said, that he was happy to find that these observations had, in part, relieved Ethelind's mind, who had felt the discovery of her father's trespasses with more poignancy than he thought her volatile disposition capable of.

There was more filial love than truth in what Mr. Eldwin urged in extenuation of his father's guilt.

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CHAP. IX.

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SIR Edward, in the mean time, had quitted the scene of his disgrace, and retired to a small village in the North, with Lady Eldwin;—to that obscurity from which he emerged when he took up his residence at Glencairn with Mr. Montague's father.—Nineteen years had elapsed since that period, and various were the ills they had produced.

On his first setting out in life, he acknowledges that his nature would have recoiled at the enormities he has since committed;—but, even then, he had formed his conduct on no good principle; he did not reason upon the *virtue* of acting right, but upon the *necessity*; so that the first temptation that was thrown in his way, whilst he thought no ill consequences would arise from it to himself, he

he freely indulged in ; for to *seem* worthy, with him, was the same as *to be so*.

The betraying his friend, and seducing an unhappy young woman from her husband, was but a piece of mere gallantry—arguing upon the manly principle of—*All women are fair game*—“ If she is innocent, as she appears to be, no arts of mine will delude her,” said he ;—“ if she is like the generality of her sex, weak and capricious, she may as well go away with me as with another.” Excellent reasoning—it was the argument of a depraved heart, and not deserving to be commented on.

However he accommodated this evil to his own mind, it gave him much pain and trouble to hide it from every other.—And why ?—If his own heart did not condemn him, what had he to fear ? Then is it not plain, that it cost him as much to silence the voice of Reason, as it would to have resisted the temptation that made him act in opposition to her law ?



There is an instinctive sense of right stationed to watch over the human heart, which is ever ready to give warning at the approach of evil; but when the passions are permitted to reign uncontrolled there, *her* voice will not be heard in the general confusion.

Sir Edward, in his first advances in vice, remained concealed; but the fear of discovery rendered him unhappy amidst all his enjoyments—something like remorse would strike upon his mind, when he looked upon the misery into which Mrs. Montague was plunged—he remembered the happiness in which she lived when he first saw her. These were but momentary reflections—he had nothing else to remind him that he had acted wrong—the world received him with smiles—he could look up without feeling the reproaches that are conveyed in the bitter language of malignancy.

When once the barrier of honour is passed, how soon the heart becomes corrupted!

rupted! The next temptation that was thrown in his way he was less prepared to meet with than the former. Considerable riches, to one who estimated wealth as the summit of happiness, were not to be lost by an over-scrupulous delicacy to the right of others. Every man to do the best for himself, was Sir Edward's motto, and by this rule he regulated his conduct.

To ingratiate himself into the favour of the late Earl of Treclanna was his next aim; and, on the death of the young Lord, he thought the secreting his female infant could not amount to an act of absolute injustice, to her family, as they were all ignorant of her birth:—the mother was not in a state to make any inquiries for her child, and thus he was once more successful. In all this time no one could doubt the integrity of Sir Edward's principles; for he was the first to condemn those who made the slightest deviation from right—started with horror from the idea of men's wearing any disguise;—nay more, he attended his church constantly,

and was scrupulously nice in the company he entertained at home. In the list of contributors to every *public* charity his name was to be read by his patron. This piece of conduct had the desired effect—the Earl died, and left him to inherit the bulk of his fortune.

When Sir Edward found himself in possession of the Treclanna estates, he had then nothing to fear:—it seemed to him that no human power could scrutinize into his conduct—yet he was not happy;—he had reached the summit of his wishes without finding content—he had not any thing to look forward to, and frequently his mind reverted to the past.—To dissipate reflection, he changed his manner of living—went into much company—drank freely, to drown thought—and entered into many frivolous pursuits.

About this time he received an account of Mrs. Montague's illness; and, soon after her death, what to do with the Lady Albina was his next consideration. He thought it would be an ease to his mind,  
it

if he married her to his son. With this view he introduced her into his family. He knew Mr. Eldwin's excentric turn of mind, and that he was more likely to attach himself to her, from the barrier that appeared to divide them, than if she had been independent of the family. How his plan succeeded, the reader is acquainted with ; what his disappointments were, on being frustrated, the sequel will exemplify. The light in which he appeared to his family, by Mrs. Montague's letters, sunk him into a state of the utmost humiliation. From that hour he began to fear, that, by some means or other, all would be discovered ;—to guard against betraying, by word or look, the guilty secret of his misery, was his constant endeavour.

But all this did not avail ; for he who had resolution to look upon others struggling with misfortunes, which he had inflicted without pity or remorse, was no sooner seized with a little bodily pain, than he had not courage to combat with his

slightest apprehension—and became his own accuser.

Thus, after plotting and contriving for so many years, debasing his nature by descending to the meanest artifices, putting on every mean disguise to conceal his intentions, he purchased to himself misery, and pain and regret to those with whom he was connected. He left London without seeing his children—he had not courage to look upon them—and retired to an obscure village in the North. There he had time to reflect upon the advantages he had lost, and the necessity of men's ever uniting the interest of their fellow-creatures with their own. Had he acted by this rule, he might now have been rich in honour, and a respectable member of society.

There are, in the ambitious man, who boldly presses forward to invest himself with the honours of the world, many excuses which may be offered for his presumption—He stakes his little fortune, or exposes himself to danger, not so much  
to



to benefit himself, perhaps, as for the advantage of those who come after him: and though such speculations seldom are rewarded according to the value by which they are estimated, yet the world, in general, is much indebted to such enterprising spirits for half the improvements that are made in the different branches of knowledge. Under this consideration ambition may be said to be laudable.

But a very nice distinction must be made between such a one and Sir Edward Eldwin, who insidiously grasps what he dares not openly take—who neither seeks for it by industry, or enjoys it by right;—but, COWARD like, hides himself under the mask of HYPOCRISY—the disgrace of NATURE, and the shame of the HUMAN RACE!

To contemplate him in the light in which he now appears, is but looking on a dark and melancholy picture:—

For man his nature never more abus'd,  
Than when each social tie—each moral law—  
Was sacrificed to passions unsubdued.

Lady Eldwin, who had been the sharer of his prosperity, though ignorant of the means by which he had attained it, accompanied him into Scotland, very ill qualified to soften the anguish he endured, or to support the mortification she herself suffered, by this debasement—complaints and reproaches were all she uttered.—Whilst Miss Dorothy, unwilling to share their disquietude, accepted Mr. Popham's offer to reside with him in the place of his daughter, where she found a kind friend in the old man; who, feeling for the unmerited disappointment Mr. Eldwin suffered by these arrangements (upon condition that he made himself useful, for the future, to his fellow-creatures), made his will entirely in his and his family's favour, bequeathing them the bulk of his hard-earned fortune.

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CHAP. X.

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**I**N the retirement of East-Cliff, Lady Albina found that peace and content return to her bosom, which had ever dwelt there, till she quitted Vernly. She traced with a sad, but pleasing melancholy, every vestige which remained of her unfortunate parents;—she visited the chamber where her mother had been confined—and the tomb in which she was buried. At her request it was opened, and her remains moved with funeral honours to the mausoleum that contained the late Earl's ancestors.

Montague came down at the appointed time—and, in the society of those most dear to her, she soon recovered her natural gaiety and ease.—Mrs. Summers and Lucy had taken up their residence at the Castle.

Montague saw, with rapture, the steadiness with which Albina's mind sustained this change of fortune. Every day brought fresh instances of its innate goodness. Nothing could exceed the satisfaction of old Arden—he became her almoner:—and the happiness and content which her munificence diffused around, once more established the tranquillity of her people.

When every thing was settled, in regard to her estates, she prepared to fulfil her engagement with Montague. She wished Mr. Walpole, who had known her father when a boy, might grace her nuptials with his presence, and act the part of a parent, by giving her away. Sir Frederick Marsdale, by whose exertions she became so soon established in her rights, was likewise present—and Mrs. Summers had the additional satisfaction of seeing Lucy united to young Wilmot, on the day which gave Lady Albina to Montague.

Mr.

Mr. Walpole purchased the house which the former had bought, a few miles distant from East-Cliff, and presented it to his nephew, Sir Frederick, in order that Ethelind might have a residence near her friends.

They remained but a few days at the Castle before they set off for London, where Lady Albina was introduced to Mr. Montague's family.

Exact in the performance of every moral duty, sheltered by the virtues, even in the midst of the splendour of fashion, and in the gay scenes of London, lived Albina and Montague; but not, as is often insidiously implied of those in whom riches are vested, strangers to the wants of others. Whilst the cup of blessing was held full to their lips, *they* forgot not from whom it was withheld. Not to the mendicant only was it offered, but to those, who, shrinking from the contempt of the un pitying multitude, languish in obscurity, hiding their sufferings deep in their own hearts.



Montague united all the tenderness and affection of a husband with the faithfulness of a friend. Albina looked up to him with increased affection, and, in his wisdom and experience, found an unerring rule for her conduct.

In her truth and simplicity, her gentleness and faith, he found all his nicest wishes could frame. But it was not now only, in the full blaze of youth and beauty, that he depended on her for happiness—but in the fond hope, when hereafter their love should be refined into a pure and tender friendship, that each might find in the other that solace in age and infirmity, which the youngest and the fairest, if life is lent *them*, must ultimately experience.

During these transactions, Mr. Eldwin supported his new character with much more steadiness than could have been expected from one so little prepared to meet with disappointment. But, however satisfied he appeared on this occasion, still it must be remembered, he was a man—

as such he felt it—as such he submitted—for, the contest which strove in his mind was as great as the victory he obtained in subduing it. For this he was indebted to Mr. Walpole, whose philanthropic spirit never felt more gratified than when he beheld Mr. Eldwin no longer acting under the influence of pride and prejudice.

It is not merely to live in obscurity which constitutes virtue—There can be no station in life wherein the heart may not remain uncorrupted;—it wants but a determined resolution, and the victory over Vice is assuredly gained.

The great harmony of Nature's works is visible throughout the universe, and, in the moral world, the chain is linked so closely, that all our happiness and comfort depend much upon each other.

This great COMPACT can only be kept perfect by an unanimous endeavour to support it. Truth and Candour is the basis on which it is fixed, and there is not  
so

so great an enemy to Virtue, or to his fellow-creatures, as the man who wears her disguise.

'Tis not by losing life that Heaven is gain'd,  
 Nor is it solitude which leads to God :—  
 He form'd this bounteous earth, our social home—  
 His sacred fane is *uncondition'd* space.  
 The Sky's whole concave is Religion's dome—  
 Its mandate Truth—Benevolence its grace !  
 Then own each part, dependant on the rest,  
 Unites to aid the universal cause ;  
 And if the great example warm your breast,  
 O ! live for Nature, and for Nature's laws.

FINIS.

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